

Labour Monthly

EDITOR R. PALME DUTT

A MAGAZINE OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR

The BRITISH PEOPLE and the SOVIET UNION

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Birthday Honours List July, 1941

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Comrades and friends, we are simply stunned by your generosity. From £56 last month the Development Fund has leapt to £156 this month. All of us here in the office are getting the Birthday Spirit in good measure, and judging from our correspondents' letters, most of them are doing the same. In spite of the bombs and food shortage, LABOUR MONTHLY must go on, and you are doing all you can to see that it shall go on. Listen to what some of you have said:

"No paper has a better record or could prove more necessary in the workers' movement than our LABOUR MONTHLY."

"To a convinced Marxist, LABOUR MONTHLY is like a breath of fresh air and a ray of light every month."

"After being duly digested, the copies will go on a propaganda tour for other people's enlightenment."

"The comrades have promised to get one new reader each for the July issue." (You must order the copies in good time, comrades; LABOUR MONTHLY **always** sells out in these days of restricted paper supplies).

"I wish I could send more, but being still in the 6th form at school, I cannot."

Cogent comment from Tewkesbury; "Sorry I can't send more; I have been here about eight and a half months, I came here from Stanley, Co. Durham. It's a very Conservative place, this. No more to say."

One comrade sends us 10/-, and then, in a really moving postscript, his wife says: "I have just learnt that my husband has lost all his medical and scientific instruments, tools and appliances, and all his books and MSS., etc., in an air raid, so for consolation I enclose another P.O. for 2/6."

But the one that inspires us most of all (and there are dozens of these, in slightly different words): "I am sorry it isn't a larger amount, but as my husband is in the Army, you will understand that this is the best I can do."

And finally, we sum them all up in the following quotation: "Twenty years of the MONTHLY is a marvellous achievement: I know of no other journal that, under such consistent editorship, has come to such a position after so many crises in the past, and now to such a success, in face of difficulties which must be greater than ever before. It's grand, and maybe it will be grander still. We must see to it. With all good wishes for the future and infinite thanks for the past."

We don't have a birthday every month, unfortunately. (Do I hear the army of volunteers writing receipts, say "Fortunately"?) But we should do. Look at the list of new Discussion Groups—52 this month alone. This is now a flourishing department, and the comrade in charge of it is grossly overworked. If we could have a Birthday every month we could all take a Sunday off occasionally, and work harder afterwards. With a regular monthly Birthday we could publish more and more pamphlets.

MAKE IT A BIRTHDAY EVERY MONTH.

Tom Short, 1s. 6d.; I. Morris, 1s.; Anon, Ealing, 5s.; Jay, 1s.; Windsor and Eton D.G., 5s.; C. B. Anderson, 3s. 6d.; Farnham Readers, £1 10s.; Macclesfield D.G., 5s.; D. R. Evans, 1s.; Tysley D.G., 2s.; Jan, 2s. 6d.; St. Alban's D.G., 10s. 6d.; R. Smith, 5s.; Corporal, 5s.; T. Brewster, 3s. 5d.; Q. Manchester, 5s.; Q.Z., 4s.; F. I. Hearn, 2s. 6d.; Ann L. Davies, £2; B. Lawson, 6s.; D. Tecwyn Lloyd, 10s.; Socialist Sailor, £5; F. C. Williams, 2s. 6d.; B. H. Steel, 1s. 2d.; H. Grenfell, 9s. 6d.; R. Pearson, 2s. 6d.; G. W. S. Robinson, 5s. 4d.; G. B. Wilks, 10s.; Anon, 1s.; D. G. Woodford, 5s.; A.V., 2s.; J.S. (Teheran), 10s.; F. H. Tyrer, 2s. 6d.; Miss L. M. Stevens, 1s. 3d.; R. J. McCreedy, 12s. 6d.; J.B. Chelmsford, 12s. 6d.; H. Weight, 1s. 5d.; G. Ramsay, 6s. 6d.; G. H. Bishop, 7s. 6d.; T. S. Coates, 10s.; A. Addy, 2s. 6d.; L. Gerard, 1s. 5d.; H. Newcombe, 5s.; C. Matthews, 5s.; L. H. Leigh-Pierce, £1; N. and E. Lipton, 2s. 6d.; J. T. Buchanan, 1s.; Red Supporter, 2s. 6d.; R.F.B., £2; G. W. Henry, 2s. 11d.; Bill, 2s. 6d.; H. G. Hugh, £1 1s.; C. Robinson, 5s.; M.E.B., 10s.; Chippenham D.G., 5s.; J. W. Porter, 2s. 6d.; M.P., 10s.; Betty R., 7s. 2d.; G. M. Driver, 10s.; P. F. Moore, 10s.; Wolverhampton D.G., £1; E. J. Gillett, 10s.; E. Barshan, 3s. 9d.; F. Green, 3s. 6d.; Phil Corbett, 2s. 6d.; G. M. Biecke, 2s. 6d.; Bacon Family, 3s.; R. F. Braybrook, 2s. 6d.; "E" G., 2s. 6d.; Red Corporal, £1; D. Cathels, 2s. 6d.; J. P. Ellis, 6s. 3d.; A. Munnings, 3s. 9d.; C. Emerson, 2s. 6d.; Gunn, 12s. 6d.; R. Trueman, 1s.; A. S. Walker, 10s.; Peggy Oldershaw, 5s.; Anon, Burnham-on-Sea, £2; C. Macdonald, 5s.; W. H. J. Abernynon, 5s.; E. Conington, 1s.; E. Sargent, £1; A. B. Challis, 10s.; Alan Gordon, 10s.; A. H. Nelson, 5s.; E. C. Levison, 5s.; M. Bullock, 9s.; Royston Green, 4s. 6d.; E. Arnall Thompson, 5s.; A.R.M., 5s.; G. N. Williams, 15s.; Enfield D.G., 16s.; A. T. Miller,

(Continued on page 4 of cover).

The British People and the Soviet Union

AS WE GO to press, the news has been announced of Hitler's proclamation of war on the Soviet Union. A special article by Ivor Montagu is included on this development. The original editorial Notes, "After Twenty Years," completed on June 20, are printed below as written, but in abbreviated form. They retain their validity as a review of the international situation on the eve of this decisive step, correctly characterising the moment reviewed as "the lull before the storm," with a period opening comparable to 1917-21, and with the Soviet Union in the centre of the international situation. But the whole world situation is now transformed by the new events. New issues of limitless import open out for the people of this country and of all countries.

Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union represents the supreme thrust of the spearhead of world imperialist reaction in face of the rising revolutionary ferment of the peoples all over Europe. The highest responsibilities rest on the working class movement in all countries, and not least in this country.

This armed conflict has long threatened. On this score there have been no illusions. Every proclamation of every leader of the Soviet Union, from the ending of the first wars of intervention, and still more from the advent of German fascism to power, has given warning of it. But the strength and the diplomacy of the Soviet Union have delayed its outbreak for nearly two decades from the ending of the first interventionist wars. They have delayed its outbreak for nine years from the coming of Hitler to power, during which the strength of the Soviet Union has grown, the crisis of imperialism has deepened, and the forces of the working people have had time to rally. The success of the Non-Aggression Pact of 1939 delayed its outbreak for two years after the launching of the imperialist war in Europe, during which the strength of the Soviet Union has further grown, the crisis of imperialism has further deepened, and the maturing of the revolutionary forces in Europe has begun.

The reactionaries all over the world, and not least in Britain and the United States, who have continuously striven, ever since the

coming of Hitler to power, to promote a Nazi-Soviet conflict as their supreme aim, have obtained their immediate objective. But they have obtained it under conditions which they did not anticipate. They were not able to achieve their Munich plan. They were not able to achieve the Chamberlain-Daladier plan through the Finland expeditions to transform the war. They have got their Nazi-Soviet conflict before the world counter-revolutionary front has yet been able to be formed, when the deepening of imperialist antagonisms and the severity of the crisis to which their frenzied policies have reduced their own peoples now make its formation more difficult, and when in consequence the people have the greatest opportunity to prevent its formation.

The responsibility for this attack rests, not only with the fascist incendiaries who have directly launched it, but also with the Anglo-American reactionaries who have continuously striven to promote it, who have placed obstacles in the way of every step to friendship with the Soviet Union, who showed their hands over Finland a year ago, who showed their hands again over the reception of the Hess Mission, and on whose potential support Hitler has manifestly calculated in launching his attack.

The responsibility also rests with the leaders of Social Democracy who, in their hatred of Communism, have played into the hands of the Anti-Soviet reactionaries and friends of fascism, who have vied with them in their anti-Soviet slander campaigns, who played the most infamous role over Finland in demanding war on the Soviet Union, and who have paralysed and disrupted the working class movement.

It is necessary to sound the sharpest warning against the attempts which the reactionaries are making and will make to utilise the present situation to promote their anti-Soviet designs. Whether or not any precedent understanding (and the history of the Hess negotiations remains a secret, although the unrepudiated Dollan allegations have made sufficiently public the character of those negotiations as turning on the possibility of a combined anti-Soviet front) encouraged Hitler to launch his attack, it is sufficiently obvious that, once the attack has been launched, the reactionaries will intensify their endeavours to utilise the situation thus created in order by successive stages (since they dare not at once show their front too openly) to put more and more in the background the inter-imperialist war and pave the way for a counter-revolutionary understanding with Hitler.

But the working class and democratic movement can defeat these endeavours. They can compel the establishment of effective collaboration with the Soviet Union. Such common action, seriously undertaken in the military and diplomatic field, could lead to the speediest defeat of fascism and the liberation of the peoples of Europe. These aims can be achieved; but they can only be achieved if the working class organisations fulfil their responsibility of leadership and break with the policies of coalition with Tory reaction. Only a People's Government can finally ensure and guarantee a policy of firm collaboration and alliance with the Soviet Union, equally imperative in the interests of the people of this country and of the Soviet Union, and directed towards the aims of the victory of the peoples of all countries over fascism and reaction.

The people of the Soviet Union are fighting for the interests of the future of humanity. Their cause is the cause of the common people all over the world. The masses of the people in every country will rally to their cause, just as the reactionaries, the decadent representatives of wealth and privilege in all countries, secretly or openly regard Hitler as their champion. Of the final outcome of this conflict there can be no question.

We enter this conflict, with no under-estimation of the seriousness of the issues or the magnitude of the forces which will be let loose by the barbarous representatives of dying capitalism against the cause of the working people and of socialism. But we enter this conflict with complete confidence in the final inevitable victory of the cause of the peoples and of socialism, whatever the vicissitudes through which we have to pass, and with the determination to do all in our power by every means to hasten that victory.

R. P. D.

CRISIS OF THE BRITISH PEOPLE

by R. PALME DUTT

Orders received for the Special 3s. 6d. Edition from "LABOUR MONTHLY" readers are more than double the quantity originally anticipated. Fortunately, we have been able to arrange for the additional supply required and all those who have sent in orders will in due course receive their copies. Any who have not yet sent cash (4s. including postage) should do so immediately. The increasing difficulties of the printing and publishing trade are delaying the completion of production, however. We still hope to commence despatch at the end of July, but will appreciate it if our readers will be patient if copies are not in their hands even at that date. We shall announce in our August issue what the position is and only after that announcement should purchasers from Bookshops and Organisations apply for their copies.

Notes of the Month

Twentieth Anniversary—New Issues—The Future is Ours—Tension of the International Situation—The Lull before the Storm—Prolongation of the Turning Point—Dilemmas of the Imperialists — Deepening Class Issues—War on Communism—On the Eve of Great Decisions.

WITH THE present number the *Labour Monthly* enters on its twenty-first year. Under other circumstances, the completion of twenty years unbroken publication of a socialist journal, fighting for a continuous line of policy throughout these twenty years, and with a continuously extending scale of influence, reaching to its highest point of circulation and influence to-day, would justify a retrospect and survey of the ground covered, the work which had been accomplished, and the lessons which have been learned during these crowded years. But to-day the very issues which have developed with increasing emphasis through these years have reached a point of urgency which leaves small room for retrospect. In a special Supplement, published alongside this number, some such survey is given, together with messages from friends in this country and other countries (limited under present conditions by the difficulties of international communication). We hope that all readers of the present number will take the opportunity of obtaining this Supplement as a memorial of twenty years of developing struggle in the history of the working class movement.

FOR TWENTY years the *Labour Monthly* has consistently fought for principles whose justification is being proved in the present crisis. It has given continuous warning where the bankrupt policies of declining British capitalism were leading the people. It has given continuous warning where those official policies in the Labour movement which have sought to tie the working class to declining capitalism were no less disastrously leading. These warnings have been continuously justified by the event. Our journal has consistently fought for the working class movement and socialism; it has upheld the cause of the colonial peoples; it has fought for the unity of the working class, for international working class unity, and for the solidarity of the working people of all countries with the Socialist Soviet Union. From the outset of the present war it has upheld the principles of working class internationalism. The issues which now open out, eclipse all that have gone before during these twenty years. During the next twenty years—and let us hope in a considerably shorter time, we may look with confidence to see the final victory of those principles for which we have fought.

BUT in the urgency of the present situation, with the desperate needs of the present stage of the working class and the people of this country, there is no room for empty-headed complacency either over the all too little that has been achieved or the certainty of the ultimate future victory of socialism. In 1931 the Chairman of the Independent Labour Party, at its Annual Conference gave vent to a prediction of the world in 1941. He said :—

“I am very glad to be alive in 1931, and will be more glad still to be alive in 1941. I am glad that the I.L.P. is alive in 1931, and when the I.L.P. Conference of 1941 assembles, perhaps in some pleasant health resort in Africa, in the Caucasus or in the Rocky Mountains, I hope to be there with a stronger body, and a more virile and happy mind to discuss the problems confronting the world at that time.

“When, in the preparation of this address I had delivered myself of this imaginative flight into the future, the practical-minded person acting as my amanuensis said ‘Who is going to pay the delegates’ expenses?’ This only shows how strongly entrenched is the ‘Gradualist’ view, and how moderate are the hopes of Socialists of to-day as to the possibilities of that near future. I do believe tht it is reasonably possible that in 1941 progress towards international Socialism will have so far advanced that the leisure necessary, the financial resources necessary and the transport facilities will all be available to make it possible for a Conference of workers to meet in whatever corner of the world appears to them most congenial and interesting, and that the international situation will be such as to make them welcome visitors to come and discuss the problems of that time, which, in my view, will not be problems of poverty.”

(J. Maxton, M.P., Chairman’s Address, I.L.P. Annual Conference, 1931).

This prediction stands to-day on record alongside the actual world situation in 1941, as a monument of idle empty-headed chatter in place of responsible socialist leadership. The future is in our hands and our making. There is no other path forward for mankind from the present barbarities and torment save socialism and the final victory of world socialism. Every other path can only lead to deepening catastrophe. But how long mankind must travel these other paths and endure their outcome, or how soon advance to the only final solution, depends above all on the role of the class conscious working class movement.

IT IS EVIDENT to all that the issues of the present world situation are approaching the highest point of tension since the outbreak of war, and indeed since the period 1917-1921. When Stalin took over at the beginning of May the direct leadership of the Soviet Government, as Chairman of the Council of People’s Commissars, the same position held by Lenin during the years of the civil war, imperialist intervention and the international revolutionary wave, this was a signal to the international working class of the character of the period now opening. Through all the confusions and cross-currents of the present moment, the decisive character of the world situation now developing is that, alongside the deepening inter-imperialist antagonisms, as the war advances to world war, there come more and more markedly to the forefront the internal class issues in each country, the national movements of revolt, and the basic issues of the relations of imperialism and the Soviet Union. In all the calculations of the imperialist Powers, in all the diplomatic and

strategic manœuvres, in all the obscure intrigues, negotiations and moves and counter-moves now in progress, as well as in the accompanying spate of press rumours and speculations, transcending all previous limits of myth-making, forgeries and contradictory sensations, one fact stands out crystal-clear: the Soviet Union occupies more and more manifestly the centre of the international situation, as the pivot around which all the moves and intrigues of the imperialists more and more openly turn.

THIS DEVELOPMENT, however, by no means proceeds along a single straight line to an inevitable immediate confrontation of the opposing camps, potentially present from the outset in this war, but goes forward in an extremely complex situation, which permits of many twists and turns, as the crisis of imperialism and its deepening antagonisms and extending war accompanies the gradual maturing of the world socialist forces. This complexity of the situation gives rise to the hesitations of all the imperialist Powers, and the dissensions within the ruling class of every leading country. The Soviet Union is no passive object of imperialist intrigues and threats, as the press speculations endeavour with crocodile concern to depict its "dilemmas," but is a most active dynamic factor, pursuing its independent policies, as the further development will show. It is the imperialist Powers that are faced with most formidable dilemmas. For the deepening of the issues of imperialism and the Soviet Union by no means excludes the simultaneous deepening of the antagonisms of imperialism and the consequent drive to the most violent extension of the war in quarters far removed from the Soviet Union. The question of the whole future development of the war is thus thrown on the anvil of decision. Hence the extreme tension of the present situation, which bears the character of the lull before the storm.

LAST MONTH we characterised the present moment as "the most critical turning point of the war." During the succeeding weeks this characterisation has still held good. The peculiar feature of this phase has been the prolongation of this turning point, a prolongation which reflects the depth of the issues and the crisis within the ruling class camps. It was widely expected that President Roosevelt's speech of May 27, after the fortnight's postponement, would mark a decisive step and clarify the situation. But President Roosevelt's speech, while carrying forward the advance of the United States towards entry into the war, remained in fact indecisive. There are comings and goings of emissaries between the various imperialist camps, including across the enemy lines. The Foreign Offices and General Staffs are working overtime. Decisions are being taken in secret by a handful of men at the top which will determine the immediate fate of hundreds of millions of people. The progress of the war awaits the outcome of these negotiations and decisions. Even the basic questions of war and of peace are canvassed. This temporary phase of unstable equilibrium, apparent uncertainty and impending heavy decisions, reflects the present close balance of forces within world imperialism, no less than in the relations of classes and in the relations

of imperialism and the Soviet Union. But this temporary phase can rapidly give place to the most violent explosions.

WHICH WAY FORWARD for the imperialists? Well may they ponder their decision and hesitate before the menacing alternatives which open out before them. For twenty-one months their war has gone forward. It has brought untold suffering to the masses of the people. It has laid waste economy, subjugated nations, devastated homes, concentrated ownership and profits in the hands of a few great combines interlocked with the State, ruined small owners, and shackled the mass of the working population in the fetters of wartime State monopoly capitalism—what Lenin called a “military penal prison for the workers.” But it has at the same time unloosed rising class forces of social unrest alongside the national movements of revolt. Its advance has been accompanied by the growing relative strength, economic, military, diplomatic and strategic, of the Socialist Soviet Union. Whither now? Can the imperialists arrest their destructive conflict, on the basis of the retention of respective gains on either side, in order to present a common front against the rising class forces and against the Soviet Union? Abstractly considered, such a “solution” might appear imperative from the standpoint of class interests. But how to reach a settlement, with the basic issue of world domination still unresolved? What concrete terms could be reached even for a temporary truce which would not in fact advantage one side or the other for the future conflict, and be built on the shifting sands of the swiftly changing relations of power? Alternatively, must they then go forward with extending war to the bitter end, to the final goal of total victory and world domination of one or the other camp, as the only way to organise the world front of imperialist reaction and advance to the eventual offensive against the Soviet Union? But how long will this road be? If the ground already begins to shake beneath their feet, what will be the situation at the end of the road? What catastrophe may not supervene before the final goal is reached? Either way is dark and perilous. Yet the choice must be made. Such is the dilemma which presents itself to the ruling class and the Governments of all the imperialist Powers.

WHAT IS OUTSTANDING in the present situation is not only the growing intensity of imperialist antagonisms, but the growing intensity of class issues. In the United States this shows itself, not only in the severity of the conflicts of capital and labour, as the attempt is made to impose on the workers the fetters of capitalist war economy without war, but in the special emphasis devoted by every speech of Roosevelt to the fight against Communism. President Roosevelt's proclamation of the State of Emergency on May 27 set out with the most explicit clearness the real war aims of American capitalism “to the end that the system of government that makes private enterprise may survive.” Administration propaganda pours out without ceasing the attacks on Communism. The American correspondent of the *News-Chronicle* reports on June 13 as if from

a battlefield: "President Roosevelt seems to me to have won a great victory. The struggle is not over by any means. Communists are well entrenched." The *Daily Herald* of June 14 finds that "the Communist influence on American Labour is an active menace," and demands that "the two American labour unions act in earnest to weed out every growth of Communism in their ranks."

TURN TO FRANCE. The same picture is revealed. The *New York Times* of March 23 described the anti-Communist campaign in France as "one of the most vigorous ever known in Western Europe," and reported how during the previous three months in Paris alone more than 1,000 arrests had been made by the French police, and 38 plants for the printing and distribution of pamphlets had been seized. Every broadcast of Darlan and Pétain concentrates on warnings against Communism as the main danger. The same picture is even more marked in the Balkan countries and throughout Eastern Europe. From Czechoslovakia the reports of Benes' own agents testified to the dominant influence of Communism. In Italy the weakening of the regime cannot be concealed. As for Germany, the Hess Mission is evidence, not only of the crisis of German foreign policy and the feelers towards a change of orientation, but of the direct fears of the ruling class aroused by the growing prestige of Bolshevism. Thus it is evident that here is common ground between the opposing imperialist camps. It is therefore no matter for surprise if the reactionaries in all countries seek to find in this common ground against the internal class enemy the basis for common ground also in foreign policy.

THUS ALL THE forces of the present situation point to a gathering of issues which may find expression in sharp changes in the international alignment and the character of the further development of the war. Most significant of all, the spate of anti-Soviet propaganda and speculation has been let loose in the Press, at the same time as there is this partial lull or deadlock in the actual development of the war. It is not possible yet to draw conclusions as to the direction in which the storm will break. The negotiations associated with a Hess or a Winant have remained secret. But it is evident that the present transition cannot be indefinitely prolonged. We are on the eve of great issues and decisions. Never was there such need for the preparedness and active independent leadership of the working class movement.

R.P.D.

Books Wanted

Social Democrat 1897—1913; S.D.F. Socialist 1902—1918; S.L.P. Weekly Peoples (prior to 1919); S.L.P. America, New Review 1913—1915; American Socialist Magazine; pamphlets of S.L.P. America prior to 1914; Chicago pamphlets I.W.W. Charles H. Kerr and S.P. of America prior to 1914; also pamphlets on Syndicalism and Industrial Unionism published in Britain prior to 1914. Lists and prices welcomed. Write W. Watson, 27 Canal Street, Kirkintilloch, near Glasgow.

Stand by the Soviet Union!

BY IVOR MONTAGU

IT IS HERE. *Der Tag*. The day world reaction has been waiting for. The attack on the Soviet Union by German imperialism making a bid to rally all the counter-revolutionary forces in the world.

Like a charge of dynamite, it blows sky-high all the carefully fostered slanders of gutter journalism and Transport House—the legend of the Communazis. Only a few days back, Provost Dollan, seeking to minimise the perils of the Hess mission, explained that it was true that Hess came here to unite British with German imperialism in the anti-Soviet crusade, but that this was nonsense since Hitler and U.S.S.R. were already bosom allies. Thus is one other anti-working class myth jettisoned on history's scrap heap.

The attack by Hitler against U.S.S.R.—“from the White Sea to the Black Sea” in Churchill's words—cannot possibly be understood as a mere device to get supplies for his war against the British Empire. Hitler foresees a long war with Britain, we are told, and needs the wheat of the Ukraine and the oil of Baku for this purpose. What arrant nonsense! General Hoffmann in 1918 found after the peace of Brest Litovsk that there was a very great difference between occupying Soviet territory and making the workers and peasants roused by the revolution once more yield product to an exploiter. The Soviets of 1941, with a rate of industrial growth unprecedented in world experience, are far from the young Soviets of 1918, inheritors of a chaos from the Tsars. Hitler could invade Soviet territory (*if he can!*) only by successfully burning the wheat fields and the oil wells that supply Soviet resistance. It should not take a great military expert to perceive that the price for Hitler's booty (*if so be he could gain it!*) would be likely to turn out expensive in comparison to value won.

The relevance of Hitler's attack is to the other conflict—the world-scale conflict of all imperialisms against the rising protest of the peoples of the world. First, there is his own jeopardy. He sits on a volcano—but it is not Churchill nor the decayed array from the Middle Ages that paraded at St. James' Palace which heats his throne. Do the mountaineers of Greece and Yugoslavia yet pick off the Nazis who stray into their hills, out of desire for the return of the dynasties that proved their ruin? Do the Czechs maintain their stubborn resistance from faith in Benes, who failed them in 1939? From the Black Sea to the White Sea; Bulgarians, Rumanians, men of the Carpatho-Ukraine and Slovakia, terrorised Poles and Jews, disillusioned peasants and trade unionists of Finland—U.S.S.R. is bordered by peoples who see their only prospect of safety from Hitler this side of the grave in the help of the Soviet

power. To wait even another year—with U.S.S.R. growing stronger, his own power more strained, his subjugated more restless, the Anglo-Americans more capable of taking advantage of the weakening of his hold on Europe were likely riskier even than to strike now. *And the blow now is a stake for a very big game indeed.*

No less than to force accommodation with, or at least weakening of the hostile action of, the Anglo-Americans, by gambling as he has so often successfully done before on the counter-revolutionary interest of decisive sections of the Western bourgeoisie. By resuming the role of saviour from Bolshevism, says Walter Duranty, Hitler calculates that it will become the interest of circles not only in Britain but in U.S.A. to see him successful. The "Evening Standard" diplomatic correspondent is of a similar opinion (June 19). For Hitler, he says, "to get concessions from Russia by diplomatic measures would not stand him so well in the countries, particularly America, where the menace of Bolshevism is apprehended, than if he was able to pose as the champion of anti-Bolshevism by fighting." (Five minutes ago the rulers of America were men of inflexible principle, who had resolved that to save civilisation Hitler must be defeated—now it is taken for granted that if he fought Bolshevism he would "stand well" with the same circles). The speech by Hoover within a few hours of Hitler's attack shows the speculation well-founded. Hitler reckons that his turn East will, at the very least, halt the rate of intervention of the U.S. imperialists against him.

Everyone knows that there are not lacking elements in Britain ready to fall in with such an arrangement. *Since Hess, more eyes are open.* The coddling of this brutal villain, the protection of those he counted on to hear his tale by the stubborn refusal to reveal even to Parliament the details of his proposals, have shown the continued strength in Britain of those who fostered Hitler, and would save him yet, rather than see Socialism advance. On the one hand Hitler's need to reach a peace before Anglo-American resources develop, on the other the Anglo-American fears, with the magnitude of Hitler's victories, that before their resources overbalance these the revolution may overtake them both—these fears bring to such circles an increasing appetite for compromise. But this compromise, whatever Hess proposed or however much the British Petains might desire it, could not but remain impractical of attainment so long as it was not *guaranteed*. Hitler had pledged to go East once before, and bilked. What surety that he would not bilk again? *Hitler's attack on the Soviet Union would no longer be a will o' the wisp promise to follow a Hess deal, it was bound to be the essential preliminary to it.*

Hence the incitement and temptation to Hitler in the British Press. "Hitler needs oil and wheat to vanquish Britain. Russia is so weak, he has only to attack her to win oil and wheat easily. Therefore there is no common Anglo-Soviet interests, no need for Anglo-Soviet friendship; withdraw Cripps and leave Russia to Hitler," chorused the Press. What was the meaning of this nonsense but the green light to go ahead? A significant incident occurred on June 19 in the omission from later

editions of the "Evening Standard" of the full column leader entitled "Russia," appearing in the early edition, stating that defeat for Russia would be a disaster for Britain, and calling for a pledge of British and U.S. aid in advance to avert calamity, and its substitution by a leader entitled "Alone," and saying that what happened in Moscow, Washington and other places would not affect the position.

Churchill's speech on the evening following the attack proclaimed as an immediate policy "full technical and economic aid" for U.S.S.R. pledged from Britain, and "hardly to be doubted" from U.S.A., sympathy by the bucketful for the Russian defending his home, promise that Churchill's own anti-Communism would not be allowed to interfere, even a good word to weigh with the Archbishops, suggesting that even the Godless pray when they fight against the same foe as British imperialism. But compare it with Molotov's and the cleavage that will become "as wide as a church door" with every Red Army victory stands out plain to all beholders. For Churchill (and presumably for his Labour colleagues in the Cabinet) this is "not an ideological war." He will tolerate the Fascism that the Red Army now will smash. For Churchill, the German mass are pitiful, dumb herds. For Molotov—the German peasants, workers and intellectuals are greeted, understood and given sympathy in *their* suffering.

This is a far more fundamental difference than the "irreconcilable difference of principle" that severs the Hitler who now seeks Baku from the French (Vichy variety and "Free" together), plus British reactionaries who prepared the maps for the journey twelve months ago ("News Chronicle," June 7); or the British, French and American reactionaries who supported the Finnish White Guards in their fight a year ago "for Democracy" (incidentally against U.S.S.R.), from the Hitler who is backing them now "against Democracy" (curiously coincidentally against U.S.S.R.).

For these gentlemen vistas of sabotage open up. ("Mustn't be too friendly with those Russians, you know—the Poles might not like it—and as for Franco, it would spoil all the good work Sir Samuel Hoare's been doing for us. Can't afford to offend Franco, or Petain, for that matter (this is not an ideological war), better let a few more war cargoes through or they'll get nasty—if anyone finds out, we can shut 'em up with the Defence Regulations").

Only one force can prevent this. Only one force can prevent the "fine words" of Churchill from becoming no more than a veil to the double-cross of the class whose executive instrument he is—the resolve of the workers of Britain to get collaboration with U.S.S.R. *and their action to see they do get it.*

The U.S.S.R. will stand as a rock. Much time has passed since 1917. Much time has passed since 1939. It is the two years gained by U.S.S.R. and the use the Soviet Union has made of it immeasurably to strengthen its position and power which has precipitated Hitler's fear and anger. The peoples of the borderland of Hitler's Europe, the workers inside Germany itself, will face terror and violence unprecedented to play their part. This cannot be in doubt. *But the battle will be bloody. For*

what is in issue here is not only the security and survival of the Socialist Fatherland, but the opportunity to the peoples of Europe to liberate themselves at one blow, not only from the yoke of the conqueror, but from the fetters of their own medieval past, the opportunity to stride forward at one step into the commonwealth of international brotherhood, where exploitation of nation by nation is ended with the ending of the exploitation of man by man; where man's leisure, and skill, and opportunity, and personality, and self-rule, blossom till the highest achievements of capitalism seem but memories fading into limbo with the superstitions of savagery.

In this battle as at every stage in recent history, the people of Britain stand in the key-sector of the line. In our hands, in the hands of the working class movement, does it lie to decide whether we shall be crushed, bamboozled, twisted, and British power be used against progress, as the reserve of world reaction, supporting Hitler's rear and inheriting his role. In our hands to decide whether we shall be deluded no longer, whether our movement will recover from the defeatists of Transport House its confidence in its ability, its faith in its purpose, and crush the reactionaries in our midst instead of tamely doing their bidding, so that the power of Britain shares with the Soviet Union the task of rescue and birth.

This is the last fight of the song. The chance has come in our lifetime. Forward, comrades.

JULY 19th GALA

Celebrating 'Labour Monthly's' 20th Birthday

5 to 9 p.m. SATURDAY, JULY 19th

CAMBRIDGE THEATRE

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A Message from **Bernard Shaw**

I FORGET the name of the Frenchman who, on being asked what part he had taken in the French Revolution, replied that he had survived it. The survival of the *Labour Monthly* for twenty years is a feat no less remarkable. The fact that its circulation runs into five figures, making it a lucrative vehicle of advertisement for books and other articles appealing to its special clientèle (if only advertisers could escape from their well-worn grooves) is part of the prodigy; for I have never seen the *LABOUR MONTHLY* exhibited for sale on a bookstall or otherwise pushed on the public. The five figures seem insignificant contrasted with a population figure of forty millions; but if you subtract from the forty millions the children, the aged, the adults old enough to be hopelessly set in their opinions, the people who get along with their fathers' politics and think what their Party newspaper tells them to think, the mental defectives who may be classed politically as idiots and could not understand a line of the *LABOUR MONTHLY* if the wind blew it into their hands, leaving only, say, five per cent. of the population between 16 and 30 years old (for on these alone can the *LABOUR MONTHLY* produce any considerable effect), and you will see the five figures in quite a different light, and understand why a propaganda that counts so few disciples can produce *Renascences, Reformations, and Revolutions.*

The twenty years lifetime of the *LABOUR MONTHLY* have made some chapters of history that the founders of British Socialism foresaw as little as Peter and Paul foresaw what would happen when Christianity became respectable. Socialism became so respectable that it not only bowled out Liberalism and was installed as the official Opposition, but actually captured the Treasury Bench and held office, led by a professedly Socialist Prime Minister.

This seemed a glorious triumph for the Fabian Society, whose Plan of Campaign for Labor, drafted by Sidney Webb and myself, had been taken up by a new proletarian body called The Independent Labor Party under the leadership of Keir Hardie, who settled the Socialist part of its program in a five minutes private chat with me on the stairs at the Bradford Conference.

Unfortunately, when Keir Hardie died, and Ramsay Macdonald became Prime Minister with Philip Snowden as his Socialist Chancellor of the Exchequer, it turned out that they were only nominally Socialists. They were really intransigent Liberals who had left the Liberal Party to join The Independent Labor Party without changing their fundamental Liberal convictions, and found themselves in the hands of the Trade Unions, who paid the piper and called the tune. Now British Trade Unionism, though Fabianized into calling itself Socialist and adopting parliamentary methods as well as direct action by strikes, is not socialistic: its aim is to exploit

the capitalist system so as to secure the lion's share of its product for the proletarian Trade Unionists instead of for the landlords and capitalists.

When Communism began in Russia (of all places!) nobody denounced it more savagely than Snowden. Macdonald's only rival in the devotion of the Conservatives was Stanley Baldwin. When Ramsay's turn came to go into Opposition for the second time, he went to the King and arranged a Coalition with himself as Prime Minister: the most Conservative Prime Minister who was ever mistaken for anything else.

Webb's feelings and my own as we contemplated this result of our Plan of Campaign for Labor may be imagined!

I was not, however, surprised, though neither I nor any other Socialist had studied the Party System sufficiently to realize how completely it had broken the power of the House of Commons, as its inventor the Earl of Sunderland had meant it to do. But I had said repeatedly, when the Miners' Federation joined the Labor Party, and put money and an overwhelming card vote into it, Socialism would have to take a back seat in the Party, and the term Socialist would come to mean no more than the term Christian after the Edict of Constantine.

When the Plan of Campaign for Labor thus killed the Socialist revival of the eighties, to which I belonged, the LABOUR MONTHLY stepped in and kept the red flag flying whilst the Labor Party was waving a tattered old Union Jack. That is why I congratulate it heartily on its twentieth birthday. Its mental methods are not always my own. Though I am one of Marx's converts I have no use for the Marxist dialectic; my mind does not work in Hegelian grooves, though I had no more difficulty than William Morris had in understanding that private property produces a government of "damned thieves," who cannot help themselves, and must, willy nilly, live by robbing the poor. Fabian Essays, which I edited half a century ago, does not mention Marx, nor contain any chain of reasoning on Hegelian lines. It is British from beginning to end, though an Irishman edited it. Later on I had to shew that Marx's theory of value was a blunder, and that, like Ruskin, he did not understand the Ricardian law of rent, a grasp of which is fundamental in Socialism.

This concerns the LABOUR MONTHLY to the extent only that if I were its editor I should bear in mind certain facts that are too gross for Mr. Palme Dutt's more-than-English subtlety of mind and aptitude for metaphysical generalization. For instance, that men are so consituted that they will work 12 hours a day, and pay monstrous rents out of their sweated wages if only they may think and say what they like in the rest of their time, rather than work eight hours a day for higher wages under complete State regulation of their lives and thoughts. Their British freedom may be a delusion and an imposture; but if an imposture is successful we must reckon with it even in our efforts to expose it.

I should therefore dwell more on the leisure of the worker under Socialism, and on the fact that leisure is the only real freedom that Nature allows us.

I should always write on the assumption that the English are brain-lazy, fatheaded, and politically ignorant in the lump, and not on the assumption

that all Englishmen and women are German University students going through a Hegelian course in the year 1840. But I should, I hope, maintain Socialism in its integrity and fundamental righteousness as Mr. Palme Dutt has maintained it. And for this may all his un-English subtlety and power of abstract thinking be forgiven him!

Messages of Greeting

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

New Masses.

Warmest Greetings on your anniversary from Editors of NEW MASSES. Splendid work of your magazine for democracy and people's peace. You have been beacon light in these stormy times to people both sides of the ocean. May you flourish in your work leading the people to that happier time we all foresee.

William Gropper.

Warmest Greetings to your publication on its anniversary which is being followed with utmost interest by all creative people of America.

AUSTRALIA.

Greetings twentieth anniversary of LABOUR MONTHLY.

Signed: Thornton (National Secretary Ironworkers Union).

Healey (National Secretary Waterside Workers Federation).

Wright (National President Sheet Metal Workers Union).

UNION OF SOUTH AFRICA.

Socialist Greetings on twentieth anniversary. Carry on militant struggle for clarity in ranks of labour movement. South African workers support you.

Signed: Food Canning and Allied Trades Union.

Sweet Workers Union.

Soap and Candle Workers Union.

Tobacco Workers Union.

Tin Workers Union.

Iron and Steel Workers Union.

Tailoring Workers Union.—16th June, 1941.

Fraternal Greetings and congratulations on consistent lead.

Signed: Left Club, Johannesburg.

ASIA

NEW CHINA DAILY

(The mass weekly newspaper of Chungking)

To LABOUR MONTHLY: Greetings on occasion Twentieth Anniversary of publication as Marxist propagandist and organiser of British working class and progressive people. Protest against suppression of Daily Worker.

EDGAR P. YOUNG.

(COMMANDER, R.N.).

In congratulating the LABOUR MONTHLY on achieving its Twentieth Anniversary, I would like to express my personal gratitude (which must be shared by numerous others in the Labour Movement) for the help which it has so consistently afforded me in the development and formulation of my political outlook. At no time in its history has the LABOUR MONTHLY played so important a role as it plays to-day, or been so essential to the cause of International Socialism and World Peace. I sincerely hope that when, next year, the LABOUR MONTHLY achieves its majority, it will also have achieved a majority for the views which it so clearly and courageously expresses.

HENRY W. NEVINSON.

(HON. D.LTT., LL.D., HON. STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD).

When I entered journalism some sixty years ago, a few of us tried to start a Labour-paper, but had to give it up because all authorities told us no Labour paper could possibly run. It would get no advertisements, and that was sufficient to damn our endeavour.

Yet you are celebrating the Twentieth Anniversary of the LABOUR MONTHLY! That shows what the croaking prophets of "Nevermore" are worth. I send you my heartiest good wishes and encouragement.

William Gallacher, M.P.

Heartiest Birthday Greetings to the LABOUR MONTHLY.

For twenty years it has given invaluable service to the labour and progressive movement of this country. It has been in the best Marxian sense, a true guide in theory and practice amid all the complications and contradictions peculiar to decaying capitalism.

To-day, more than ever, when the leaders of the Labour Party are trying to drag the movement into the camp of Tory imperialism, the organised workers need the LABOUR MONTHLY.

To-day, more than ever, when wild speculations and specious slanders of the Soviet Union are the stock in trade of the Government controlled press, the LABOUR MONTHLY stands firm for the Peace policy of the Soviet Union and gives a clear presentation of the continually changing international situation.

The LABOUR MONTHLY has given great service during the past twenty years; it will give greater service in the vital years that lie ahead.

ALEXANDER MacLAREN, J.P.

GENERAL SECRETARY, NATIONAL FEDERATION OF RETAIL NEWS-AGENTS, BOOKSELLERS AND STATIONERS).

I should like, as representing the National Federation of Retail Newsagents, to heartily congratulate the LABOUR MONTHLY on reaching its Twentieth Anniversary.

All through the years it has been an outspoken advocate of advanced political opinion and also throughout this period the retail newsagents have extended to the LABOUR MONTHLY the same right of publicity and distribution which they extend to all other publications whatever their political colour may be—right, centre or left.

I feel I ought to make it clear that the National Federation I represent is wholeheartedly behind the Government in the prosecution of the war to final Victory, but this does not in any way mean that we shall not now, as in the past, and I trust in the future, stand firmly for the principle of "freedom of the press."

LORD PONSONBY OF SHULBREDE.

I should like to congratulate the LABOUR MONTHLY on the celebration of its Twentieth Anniversary. No more valuable work can be done, specially in these days, than the fostering and strengthening of friendships and good will between the workers of all nations. Governments may come and Governments may go, political parties may be in the ascendant or fall into a backwater, but the workers of the world remain and are the backbone and inspiration in the national life of every country. They may be courted and cajoled, they may be dominated and weakened, they may be tricked and deluded by their own leaders and they may be exploited by powerful interests. But their enemies pass while they endure. Once they understand that differences of nationality are only superficial and with their fellow workers in foreign lands they have no quarrel, they can unite together in a common cause. All who strive to promote this unity of purpose are doing the best work for the foundation of lasting peace in the world. May the LABOUR MONTHLY continue to flourish.

W. H. THOMPSON.

I am reminded that the LABOUR MONTHLY is celebrating its Twentieth Anniversary. I remember its birth. I remember its different contributors over the years and many of the contributions. What changes have taken place!

It might be interesting to reprint some of the older articles and defy your readers to guess who wrote them. It cannot, of course, be denied that the LABOUR MONTHLY has played a valuable and exceptional part in political thought in this country. It has persistently and consistently put forward views which have been disliked and criticised. Its principal fault is, no doubt, that it is too often right. It will doubtless continue to be disliked for the same reason.

SYLVIA TOWNSEND WARNER.

I send my warmest congratulations to LABOUR MONTHLY—and to its readers—on its twentieth consecutive anniversary. To have persisted for twenty years without being either browbeaten or bamboozled is a very proud record for a periodical.

You ask me in what way I find LABOUR MONTHLY helpful? In more ways than there is space to recount; but perhaps I can sum them up by saying that LABOUR MONTHLY is a constant assurance to me that Socialism is not merely a political or economic, but a vital theory. There is no corner of the mind that it cannot refresh and enlighten.

To my congratulations may I add my best wishes that in July 1942 LABOUR MONTHLY may hold a glorious coming-of-age with all that that signifies.

H. J. ADAMS.

(CHAIRMAN—THE PEOPLE'S CONVENTION).

Congratulations on the magnificent struggle for 20 years to maintain and improve LABOUR MONTHLY, and the splendid lead it has given and still is giving to the people of this and other countries who wish for change from a system based upon the profit motive with all its attendant miseries in peace and war, to a new order of Peace, Freedom and Plenty.

I count it an honour to have been a contributor and express the hope that the magazine will continue its successful career and increase its beneficent influence.

CAPTAIN HAROLD GRENFELL, R.N.

Hearty greetings to L.M. on this occasion of its twentieth birthday.

During two dismal decades of world-wide blackest political reaction, it has ever sought, with courage, vision and truth, to keep alight the torch of humanitarian progress along the road leading to the last goal of real civilization, that most inspiring of all human ideals, the kingdom of the brotherhood of mankind.

D. N. PRITT, K.C., M.P.

You ask me to send you a Twentieth Anniversary message, "as an old contributor." But you have contributed far more to me than I have to you! For you have done—and are still doing—a very great deal for my continued education.

What I have written for you has been a labour of love—a labour because it is very difficult to write anything good enough to appear in your columns, and a labour of love because it warms my heart—and cools my head—to work with you for Socialism.

What you have achieved in the last twenty years—and not least in the last twenty months—is precious beyond computation; and what you will achieve in the near future is far more. We are approaching the brow of the hill.

ARTHUR HORNER

(Chairman—South Wales Miners' Federation).

The service which the LABOUR MONTHLY has rendered to the working-class Movement in these 20 years cannot be paralleled by any other magazine in this country. It has attained a standard in class politics which has placed it in the front rank of journals explaining the full meaning of Marxism. It has interpreted the measure which Marxians should apply to the various problems facing the workers, in a masterly fashion. Its Editorials have established for it a place in literature which no other magazine in the English language can surpass. It has explained the application of Marxist Leninist policy in the Soviet Union under the Leadership of Stalin, in a clear and faithful fashion.

I feel personally indebted to it for the service which it has rendered to the cause of the miners in their various struggles to obtain a reasonable standard of existence. From 1921 onwards, and especially during the 1926 strike its pages were used by A. J. Cook, myself and others to the full limit of our capacity. Its excellence consists in the way it has wedded theory to practice, in the way it has analysed, not only what should be done, but as well, how to do it. Its place cannot be taken by any other publication in this country, and I am hopeful that it will develop so that men like myself may have the continued possibility of reading your articles and others, giving those who, like myself, are engaged in daily administrative and practical work a tremendous advantage which would not be provided for us other than through the LABOUR MONTHLY.

[Other messages received, too many to be printed in this issue, are given (together with a reprint of the above greetings from Bernard Shaw, etc.) in the Special Supplement pamphlet, entitled "FORGING THE WEAPON: the Struggle of the Labour Monthly 1921—1941." This pamphlet also contains a full memoir of the magazine against the background of twenty years political struggles, written by R. Page Arnot.

The 20th anniversary will be celebrated by a gala and meetings in various parts of the country, organised largely by the Discussion Groups. An advertisement of the gala in London appears on another page in this issue.]

Changes in Capitalism During the War

BY E. VARGA

FOR THE second time in a quarter of a century the imperialist bourgeoisie is driving millions of proletarians to mutual slaughter, driving the population of whole continents into starvation and untold suffering. The big bourgeoisie has inflicted this disaster upon mankind not by their own "free will," not because of a whim, but in obedience to the inexorable laws of imperialism, which make wars for the re-division of the world inevitable. Remembering what occurred during and after the first imperialist war, the big bourgeoisie (or, at all events, the wisest of its representatives) is well aware of the dangers involved in the second imperialist war for capitalist society, particularly in the vanquished countries. It is mobilizing all its forces and is waging a struggle on two fronts: against the external enemy—its imperialist rivals—and against "the enemy at home"—the revolutionary working class, the masses of the peasantry and the progressive intelligentsia. This double task entails changes in the economics and politics of present day capitalism, which to a far larger extent than in the first World War is being, as Lenin said, *transformed from monopoly capitalism into monopoly war state capitalism*. Lenin described this state monopoly capitalism as follows:—

"... state monopoly capitalism is the complete *material* preparation for Socialism, the *prelude* to Socialism, a rung in the ladder of history between which and the rung called Socialism *there are no intermediate rungs*. (Lenin-Stalin, 1917, p. 452).

Let us examine the main trends of the changes in capitalist economy in this second imperialist war. The present war is causing a general diminution in real wealth in the belligerent countries far more rapidly than the World War did. This is due to the following reasons:—

The present war is a "total war" to a far larger extent than the World War was. The war is not being waged only against the enemy's army and navy, but also against his economic resources, and against the whole people. The devastation caused by aerial warfare, which is assuming ever greater importance in modern war, is greatly accelerating this process of impoverishment. On the other hand, the war is being waged not only by armies, navies and air forces, but literally by the whole people. The activities of the workers in the factories, the peasants in the fields, the scientists in their laboratories and the housewives in their kitchens, are all subordinated to the war. All of them, in their way, are contributing either to success or failure in the war.

The present war is much more costly than the first World War. It costs ever so much more in the present war to equip an army which now needs tanks, motor-trucks and aircraft, anti-tank and anti-aircraft guns, and vast quantities of machine guns and automatic rifles. Not only are

armies more heavily armed, but the weapons themselves cost more than they did in the World War, not only in money,* but also in labour time. The cost of producing a battleship, a gun, a tank or an airplane** is many times higher than it was in the first imperialist war. This means that a much larger part of the labour product in the belligerent countries assumes the form of war materials of every kind, and consequently, a much smaller amount is left available to replace used up capital and to supply the individual needs of the civilian population. This gives rise in the belligerent countries to the necessity of constantly increasing state control of capitalist economy.

If the bourgeois state, which represents the class interests of the big bourgeoisie as a whole, allowed the capitalist system to run its own way during the war, if it did not deeply penetrate into the process of capitalist production with a view to controlling it, the following would result. The prices of all commodities would rapidly rise. The limited supplies of consumers' goods would be largely bought up and hoarded by the well-to-do classes. The labour power of the industrial workers, the regular reproduction of which is essential for the continuous production of all war materials, could not be maintained owing to the malnutrition of the workers. Output would rapidly sink, and this would mean defeat in the war and the acceleration of the revolutionary crisis at home. It is therefore in the interests of the big bourgeoisie to ration, at prices fixed by the state, the limited available quantities of consumers' goods among the working people commensurate with the importance of the work they are doing for the conduct of the war. Workers engaged on heavy work get more meat and fats than other workers, and those engaged on the heaviest work get more than those engaged in heavy work.

This "fair" distribution of consumers' goods also serves to combat the "enemy at home," since it is drilled into the workers' minds that "all citizens equally bear the burdens of the war," and that as far as the distribution of food is concerned the workers even have priority over the well-to-do classes. But the bourgeoisie can satisfy its requirements by purchasing the available supplies of the more costly articles of food, such as game, poultry, fruit, choice vegetables, etc., the sale of which is not controlled, and which the workers cannot afford to buy. As for clothes, underclothing, footwear, etc., the bourgeoisie always have supplies to last them for many years.

If the capitalist state did not intervene in the distribution of raw materials in the interests of the bourgeoisie as a whole, these raw materials, in consequence of the anarchy of the capitalist market, would be bought up by those capitalist firms that could pay the highest price for them. Enterprises that are directly or indirectly of the highest importance for the conduct of the war might be left without raw materials.

* At the end of 1940, England's expenditure amounted to £12,000,000 per day. Germany's expenditure—if we take the increase in the national debt and two-thirds of the revenues from taxation as war expenditure—amounts to from five to five and a half milliard marks per month.

**Information from various sources clearly indicate that the average cost of the airplanes that Great Britain buys in the United States is no less than \$100,000 each.

That is why the state in all belligerent countries controls raw materials* and distributes them among the capitalist enterprises commensurate with their importance in the conduct of the war.** This state control of raw materials is at the same time an important method of increasing the power of capitalist monopoly at the expense of the medium and small enterprises, and particularly of the small artisans, who as a consequence of the shortage of raw materials brought about by the war are compelled to give up their—often fictitious—independence and become wage workers.

If the bourgeois state allowed the economy of the country to run its own way during the war, the available means of production in the country would be used to manufacture goods that were useless, or of minor use, for war purposes. The present total war, however, demands that the whole productive capacity of the country be adapted to war purposes, the more so that if the war lasts a long time, the normal replacement of used up fixed capital will become impossible. That is why the state in the belligerent countries controls the utilization of the means of production in the interests of the big bourgeoisie as a whole, and decides which articles, and in which quantities, shall be produced in the different enterprises.

The present total war is causing a shortage of labour, particularly of skilled metal workers. If the state in the belligerent countries allowed the customary anarchy to prevail on the labour market the capitalist employers would entice workers away from each other by the offer of higher wages. This would be neither in the interests of the bourgeoisie as a whole, nor guarantee continuity in the production of war materials. That is why workers are prohibited from changing their jobs, and why the state is distributing labour power. For the same reason the state is controlling the transport system: allocating the available shipping for transporting cargoes that are most important for the conduct of the war, controlling railways and motor transport, controlling exports and imports, etc. The machinery of state control in wartime—once it is set in motion in one sphere of economic life—must necessarily extend to other spheres until the whole capitalist economy is brought under state control, and monopoly capitalism is transformed into monopoly war state capitalism.

* * * * *

. . . The war monopoly state capitalism of the big imperialist countries is not confined to its own countries, but extends to other countries in various ways. For example, the British government has bought the whole of the wool clip in Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, the whole of the

* The control and distribution of raw materials extends not only to newly produced materials, but also to old materials that can be temporarily or permanently diverted from their hitherto peaceful uses. The iron gates and fences of parks and gardens, copper and aluminium domestic utensils, church bells, etc., are mobilised for war purposes no less than waste paper, waste textile fabrics, etc.

** The only exception is the United States, where, owing to the abundance of raw materials in the country, state control has not been established. The state confines itself to importing and storing large quantities of materials that are essential for war purposes and are totally lacking, or scarce, in the country. Among these are tin, manganese, copper, antimony, etc.

cotton crop in Egypt, the whole of the cocoa crop in the French colonies that are controlled by de Gaulle, etc. The economy of the United States is being largely adjusted to meet Great Britain's war requirements. Germany not only controls the economy of the occupied territories, but exercises far-reaching influence on the economy of countries like Hungary, Yugoslavia, and Rumania.* She enters into contracts with those countries for the cultivation and delivery of oilseeds at prices fixed beforehand by the respective governments, for the delivery of ores, hogs, etc. The governments also make mutual arrangements as to the kinds and price of manufactured goods Germany is to deliver in payment, and also the rates of exchange of their currency.

The organisation of war monopoly state capitalism calls for an immense increase in the state apparatus. Millions of people are withdrawn from the sphere of production to arrange for and control the purchase and distribution of foodstuffs, raw materials, manufactured consumers' goods, machinery, transport facilities and labour power. Thus, the state control of capitalist economy, which necessarily arises in order rationally to direct the inadequate supplies of the elements of capitalist production into the channels necessary for conducting the war, dialectically becomes a factor in the further impoverishment of the country.

Under war monopoly state capitalism the power of the state apparatus over the individual worker is almost unlimited. The state apparatus decides where the worker shall work, how long he shall work, how much he shall be paid, how much and what he shall eat, what he should or should not read, what he should or should not hear over the radio, what he may talk about, and what he must remain silent about. This power also extends over the peasants, the artisans, the small shopkeeper, and over all working people. The big bourgeoisie uses this apparatus to strengthen its power over the working people and to safeguard its profits.

In order to counteract the growing discontent of the masses, the cry has been raised in many countries that this time the bourgeoisie must not make any war profits; war profits must be taxed 100 per cent.: dividends must be kept within pre-war limits, etc. Needless to say, the big bourgeoisie, which controls the state apparatus, has numerous ways and means of circumventing these laws that are passed to pacify the working people . . .

The leadership and personnel of the controlling apparatus are not quite the same in all countries. In the United States and Great Britain big capitalist magnates are openly at the head of all the most important war economic state capitalist organizations: Knudsen, former director of General Motors in the United States, Lord Beaverbrook and others, in Great Britain. To weaken the resistance of the workers to the oppression of the state capitalist apparatus reformist trade union leaders and labour politicians were extensively brought into this apparatus: Bevin, Attlee, Greenwood and Morrison in Great Britain, and Hillman in America. The "theory" familiar to us from the World War, that war state

* This article was written before the recent changes in the Balkans. [Ed. L.M.]

capitalism is "war socialism," has been revived and put into circulation. Taught by their experience of the last World War, however, the masses of the workers in the capitalist countries will have nothing to do with this "theory."

In some countries the apparatus of State capitalism differs somewhat from that in the Anglo-Saxon countries. The capitalists themselves remain more in the background and push the military and professional politicians, the majority of whom have risen to the position of the big bourgeoisie, into the foreground. Instead of reformist leaders it is these representatives of the ruling party known to the workers who are performing the function of adjusting the working class and all working people to the requirements of the war and to the interests of the imperialist bourgeoisie.

Thus, all along the line we see the two-fold function of war monopoly state capitalism : to organise and centralise all the economic resources of the country for war against the external enemy; and to organise all the forces of the bourgeoisie and of its state against the "enemy at home," against the revolutionary working class and the masses of the working people.

* * * * *

Important though the role of the present war in the development of state capitalism may be, it would be quite wrong to attribute this development entirely to the war. Its roots lie far deeper. The war is merely accelerating and extending the trends that have been operating throughout the period of the general crisis of capitalism.

The methods by which the bourgeoisie utilises the state have undergone considerable change since the bourgeoisie has been in power. At the time when, with the assistance of the masses of the working people, the bourgeoisie overthrew the feudal state and released the productive forces of society from the fetters of feudalism, it restricted the functions of the state mainly to the protection of private property.

This was the period of the predominance of the "Manchester School," of free trade, when the theory that predominated among the bourgeoisie was that the state must not interfere in capitalist economy. This was the period of the rapid expansion of capitalist markets, when the contradiction between the unlimited tendency of capital to expand and the relatively limited consuming capacity of capitalist society found expression in periodical crises of over-production. On the whole, in this period, capital could find extensive investment without the direct assistance of the state.

With the development of monopoly capitalism, the contradictions between the tendency of capital to expand and the limited consuming capacity of society has asserted itself more sharply and permanently. The bourgeoisie cannot eliminate this contradiction on a general, world scale; but the bourgeoisie in each capitalist country has tried to utilise the state as a means of eliminating it within its own territories. The theories of the "Manchester School" gave way to the "theory" that the state must protect the economy of the country. This explains the efforts of the state

to protect the home market by means of high tariffs, by monopolising colonial markets for home industries, state subsidised dumping, etc.

In the period of the general crisis of capitalism the contradiction between the tendency of capital to expand and the limited consuming capacity has become still more acute and chronic. The cyclical process of capitalistic reproduction has been disturbed. The crises of over-production have become very deep and acute; they are followed by long periods of depression; the economic revival is tardy and periods of boom hardly occur. The bourgeoisie is no longer capable of utilising the available means of production to their full capacity; a very large part of fixed capital remains permanently idle. The bourgeoisie is no longer able to make use of the fertility of the soil; with the assistance of the state the crop area is reduced and large quantities of foodstuffs are withdrawn from the market and destroyed. The bourgeoisie is no longer able to employ its wage slaves; a large section of the proletariat remains permanently unemployed. The bourgeoisie is no longer able to transform its profits realised in money form into productive capital; an increasing share of these profits are accumulating as idle capital. Capitalist society is obsolete; it has become an obstacle not only to the further development of the productive forces but even to their mere utilisation.

This historical obsolescence of capitalist society serves as the basis of state capitalist development in the period of the general crisis of capitalism, also irrespective of the war. In this period there is a constant increase in armaments. The economic difference between peacetime capitalism and wartime capitalism steadily disappear.

“When capitalists work for the defence, i.e., for the government, it is obviously no more ‘pure’ capitalism, it is a special form of national economy. Pure capitalism means commodity production. Commodity production means work for an *uncertain* and free market. But the capitalist ‘working’ for the defence does not work for the market at all, he fills the orders of the government, and money is invariably advanced to him by the Treasury.” (Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XX, p. 236).

Naturally, in no country have these state capitalist measures overcome the restricted capacity of the home market. Consequently, their purpose was changed. They were no longer directed towards the attempt to expand the home market—which was shattered by the inherent laws of capitalism—but to the end of systematically adjusting production to the limits of consumption, of securing the organised reduction of production by means of compulsory cartels, the prohibition of the erection of new enterprises, etc. But this merely served to bring out more strikingly than ever the contradiction that is characteristic of present-day capitalism, namely, the vast concentration of production in vast enterprises and the very limited capacity of the home market of the small countries.

In the present war the imperialist Great Powers are making an effort to eliminate the chronic contradiction between the limits of the home market and the high concentration of capital, which demands enormous markets, by expanding the economic field, by absorbing the small countries in their own economic area.

* * * * *

We think that the further progress of capitalist economy will be on the following lines:—

The longer the war lasts the more the belligerent countries will become impoverished in real wealth: the stocks of raw materials and finished goods will become exhausted, machinery, buildings and railways will become worn out, the fertility of the soil will diminish. Production will diminish correspondingly. To continue the war the belligerent countries will be compelled to control their economy still more strictly, to reduce consumption on the part of the working people still further, and compel the proletariat to make still greater exertions for the victory of their bourgeoisie. That means that war monopoly state capitalism will develop still further. But this will all the more intensify the contradiction between the two objects of modern war capitalism, between victory over the external enemy and the suppression of the revolutionary forces. The first object, victory over the external enemy, can be achieved only by subjecting the working population to ever-increasing burdens and privations. In the effort to achieve this object, namely, the victory over the external enemy, the bourgeoisie is compelled to pave the way for its own defeat by the "enemy at home." As Lenin wrote:—

"The dialectics of history is such that the war, by extraordinarily expediting the transformation of monopoly capitalism into state monopoly capitalism, has *thereby* extraordinarily advanced mankind towards Socialism." (Lenin-Stalin, 1917, p. 452) . . .

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The Scaffolding of Servitude

The Meaning of Essential Works Orders

BY J. R. CAMPBELL

IN THE last few months, when public attention has been concentrated on the unbroken series of military defeats abroad, and the apparently unending process of muddle and corruption at home, there has been taking place, almost unnoticed, a great legal transformation of the status of the British working man. When the history of 1941 comes to be written it may be that its outstanding event will not be the Battle of the Atlantic, or the Battle of the Mediterranean, but the smooth introduction of the Essential Works Orders into the main industries of the country, with the connivance of the Trade Union bureaucracy. Already in operation in the engineering, shipbuilding, mining, merchant navy, docks, and building industries, these Orders will shortly be introduced into steel, railway, and transport.

The Background of Impoverishment

These Orders are being introduced amidst the growing impoverishment of the working class. The official cost of living index registers an increase in the cost of living of 5s. 8d. in the £. As many of the articles which are listed in the cost of living index are no longer available in sufficient quantities the workers have, in most cases, to buy dearer substitutes. It is an extremely modest estimate to say therefore that the real cost of living has increased by at least 6s. 8d. in the £. That means that a man earning £3 per week in September, 1939, requires at least £1 to bring his wages up to the level of the increased cost of living on the basis of a normal working week. A man earning £3 10s. would require £1 3s. 4d., while a man earning £4 would require £1 6s. 8d. The actual increase of wages for a normal working week are as follows:—

Engineering and Shipbuilding Works	8s. 6d. per week.
Building Workers	{ 11/- for 44 hours.
	{ 12/- for 48 hours.
Dockers	2/- per day.
Miners	17/- (exclusive of increases on ascertained basis.)
Railway Workers	11/- (exclusive of increases for lower paid workers in September, 1939.)
Passenger Transport Workers	11/- per week.

The discrepancy between the rising cost of living and wages is becoming so terrific that voices are being heard in the capitalist camp advocating that the cost of living index be disregarded in wage negotiations altogether.

Let us examine this argument which makes an appearance in the *Economist* of May 31st. The function of a cost of living index is to show how much it costs to procure a given list of commodities which enter into the standard of living of a working class family. A certain year (1904 in the present index) is chosen as the base year. It is ascertained that the working class habitually consumed certain goods and services in this year, and it is further ascertained what proportion of their expenditure goes for various goods and services, for rent, for food, for clothes, and for transport, etc. The question which the cost of living index seeks to answer is as follows:—"Given that in the base year, 1904, the working class spent its income on goods and services in certain proportions, what would it require to expend to-day if it spent its income on the same class of goods and in the same proportions." In other words, the cost of living index tells the workers in a rough and ready way what money they need in any given year if they want to obtain the same standard of life as they or their fathers had in the year when it was first drawn up. Now the need for such index is obvious. The worker is not only interested in the amount of money wages that he gets, but in the purchasing power of those wages; whether the same amount of money buys more or less than it did, say, in September, 1939. The index does not, of course, tell him whether the working class standard of life, which is the basis of its calculation, is very good or very poor. It only tells us how much money he needs to obtain that standard at present prices. But it does very roughly and inadequately show us the trend of things. It answers the question. "Are we on the up-grade, or are we on the down-grade?" And it is because it shows most clearly that the workers are on the downgrade that the *Economist* desires to sweep it aside at the present time. For example, the new clothes rationing order restricts the amount of clothes we will buy. We may not be able to spend the same proportion of our income on clothes as formerly. Or we may move away from eggs, meat, fruit, and other high grade foods to a war diet, whose main constituents are bread, oatmeal and potatoes. The cost of living index shows us what it costs to obtain the high grade (high grade is a purely relative term here) diet which we have moved away from. It does not tell us the cost of the low grade diet to which we may be forced. This defect of the index in the eyes of the *Economist* is, however, its merit in working class eyes. For the workers had by painful struggle and sacrifice built up a certain standard of life by September, 1939. They want to know how far short of that standard of life they are now. They want a rough and ready means of appraising the value of any wage increases they may have obtained; they want to know at every stage of the war what the real cost of the war is to them. Only then are they in a position to really defend their standard of life. That is why in all discussions and wage negotiations the workers cannot afford for a moment to let the relation between wages and the cost of living be lost sight of.

The Purpose of the Orders.

Bearing in mind this background of growing impoverishment, let us ask ourselves what is the purpose of the Essential Works Orders. To read some trade union journals one would imagine that the chief aim of those

orders was to confer upon the working class the inestimable blessing of a guaranteed week. Nothing of the kind. The object of the orders was well indicated by Mr. Bevin when he said:—

Recently I met the Clyde shipbuilders . . . and what was their cry? They said "You, the Minister of Labour, must undertake discipline. I said "Why?" They replied "We cannot." I said "Why can't you?" They replied "Because sacking is no good."—Speech in House of Commons, April 2nd.

Here is the essence of the whole question. In normal times capitalist labour discipline is maintained by the exercise of the right to sack, tempered by trade union resistance. But in times of good trade the efficacy of the right to sack is reduced considerably. The sacked worker, after two days' rest, can get a job elsewhere. As a general method of discipline the right to sack has lost its terror, though it remains a useful weapon in the hands of employers who want to remove trade union militants from key factories. There is also looming up the fact that the food shortage, the clothes shortage and the high income tax may rob numbers of the young single workers of any decisive economic incentive to work overtime. Thus it becomes necessary to replace the economic incentive with a penal compulsion. In the case of the older worker with a family to maintain the economic incentive may continue to operate, but such workers are increasingly liable to fatigue. A penal stimulus is therefore introduced here also to supplement the economic stimulus.

Thus the four misdemeanours in the Essential Works Orders for Shipbuilding and Mining are:—

- (1) Being persistently late.
- (2) Being absent from work without an adequate excuse.
- (3) Refusing to obey a lawful order (which the Shipbuilding Order clearly says includes an order to work overtime).
- (4) Conduct calculated to impede production (which may amount to no more than an attempt to defend some trade union custom).

Workers accused of those misdemeanours will be warned by a National Service Officer to mend their ways, and if they repeat the offence they are liable to a fine of £100, with the alternative of three months' imprisonment. In the mining industry there appears to be a double punishment for absenteeism. The absentee worker loses his 6s. per week attendance bonus and may be fined and imprisoned into the bargain.

Some audacious members of the trade union bureaucracy have dared to compare the Essential Works Orders with that obligatory Labour service that a Socialist State might at a certain stage of development exact from all its adult, able-bodied citizens. This contention can be exposed in three propositions (1) the compulsory labour service in Britain does not apply to all citizens, but only to the workers who are employed in certain industries; (2) the penal legislation of the State is invoked in order to discipline workers who are in the private employment of an employing class, and who are working to augment the profit of that employing class; (3) after 45 years of age, no rich capitalist shareholder is liable for any form of industrial conscription whatever. What has this in common

with compulsory labour service on the part of all citizens in a Socialist state? Nor is it accurate to suggest that the worker is being adequately compensated for having to work under this onerous and inequitable discipline because he has got the concession of the guaranteed week. The guaranteed week was a necessary equivalent for the state exercising the right to keep a man from leaving the job at which he is employed. If the state keeps a man in a particular workshop, it is obviously entitled to force the employer to pay him wages for the full week, even if owing to some muddle outside the control of the management or the workers the expected raw materials have not arrived and there is no work for the worker to do. Further, if the worker is denied the right to leave an employer whose factory has been blitzed, he is morally entitled to wages whether or not his employer can give him sufficient work to do. A guaranteed week is the necessary corollary of the worker being refused the right to leave his job, but it is absolutely preposterous to claim that the giving of a guaranteed week entitle the employers in the last analysis to bring in the policeman and the magistrate to help him in maintaining workshop discipline—for this is the central meaning of the Essential Works Orders. Nor will it do for the trade union bureaucracy to argue that they are establishing for all time the cherished principle of the guaranteed week. On the contrary, they are making the guaranteed week dependant on the right of the employer and the state to tie a man to his job and to fine and imprison him when he is late, absent from work, refuses to work overtime, or to give up some dearly-bought trade union right. The guaranteed week of a free worker is one thing. The guaranteed week of an industrial serf is another, and the sooner the union bureaucracy begins to be able to distinguish those things the better it will be for those they are supposed to be leading. Further, the advantages of the guaranteed week are at their lowest in time of war, which is a period of full employment, not to say overwork. Stoppages of work through lack of raw materials will probably decline considerably as the war goes on and the guarantee will really only operate when a factory has been blitzed. That is a mighty thin concession to balance against the imposition on the workers, with the cheering approval of the trade union bureaucracy, of a Fascist penal labour discipline. And the value of this thin concession vanishes as the cost of living rises.

Blaming the Worker

Further, the meek acceptance of the Essential Works Orders is an acceptance of the proposition that it is the workers' lateness for work, his absenteeism, and his refusal to work overtime that is responsible for slowing down production. The meanness of this lie is seen if we examine two characteristic bottle necks in production to-day—mining and building. It is well known that the first mentioned industry was depleted of men in the most reckless manner. Further, the men who remained were denied the possibility of a proper mid-day meal, for the general shortage of food has re-acted disastrously on the mining industry, where men cannot, as in the case of factory industry, take advantage of canteen facilities mid-way through their shift. The miner carried his home-made sandwiches down the pit in pre-war days, and according to his income and the day of the

week between the bread there were bananas, or cheese, or tomatoes, or bacon, or beef, or eggs. Every one of the articles listed is now unobtainable for the miners' mid-day sandwich except cheese, the weekly ration of which might last him for two meals. In Scotland miners have been known to go down the pit with nothing more nourishing to sustain them than toast and margarine. Naturally there has been a fall in the output. Toast and margarine do not provide the energy to work effectively amid the din and the strain of a modern mechanised pit. If there is slackness or absenteeism in such circumstances, let those who tolerate the present rotten methods of food "control" accept their responsibility.

The case of building is even more damnable. Everyone knows that to organise a vast plan of building without centralised control of the operations by the state was to invite the most hideous waste and mismanagement. Here is a typical fact. In any given Government job there were usually twenty or more contractors doing different parts of the work. When a contractor's particular job was done he would dismiss his men who went back to the Labour Exchanges and remained idle for two days or a week before they were sent back to another contractor who was just opening out on the same job. A Labour Exchange on the site would have obviated all this, but though this was talked about in a number of big jobs, with which the writer is acquainted, nothing was ever done. The number of man hours lost in this imbecile process was appalling. Then there was the grotesque cost-plus system of contracting which gave the contractor the most direct economic incentive not to hurry up production. The result is that the building programme is behind schedule, is holding up the other sectors of the war effort, and the Ministry of Labour rushes in to coerce the workers. From henceforth the policeman and the magistrate is to stand behind the foreman in enforcing discipline, while speed up and payment by results is foisted on the industry in spite of the opposition of the reformist bureaucracy itself. The worker is called upon to pay for years of appalling corruption and mismanagement.

What Can the Workers Do?

In the mining industry it has been asked by some workers that if penal discipline is the essence of the Essential Works Order, why should not the workers refuse to operate it. But neither the workers nor their representatives are called upon to operate the Order in this sense. Suppose the workers refused to associate with the various joint committees under the Orders—the yard committee in shipbuilding or the pit committee in mining—and refused to be represented on the local Appeals Boards, it would not make the slightest difference, for the people who operate the Order are the management, and the Ministry of Labour officials—the National Service officers. Suppose a worker is absent from work, the management reports him, the National Service officer interviews him or admonishes him, and if the worker repeats the offence he can be taken before a court and fined or imprisoned. Of course there is machinery of consultation and appeal. Before he admonishes or prosecutes a worker the National Service Officer can discuss the matter with yard committee or pit committee consisting of equal representation of management and men. (There is no similar Committee provided for in the Essential Works

Order in the engineering industry). But if the management and the National Service Officer are bent on prosecuting the man the objections of the workers representatives could be speedily swept aside. The case would then proceed to the local Appeal Board, with one representative of the workers, one of the employers, and one of the Ministry of Labour, who in the last analysis tips the balance whichever way he cares. Thus, after the motions of consultation are gone through, the Ministry of Labour official has the power of a Nazi Labour "Trustee."

In the opinion of the writer, therefore, we should do all in our power to (1) protect the worker from the penal consequences of the Order, and (2) to campaign for their withdrawal while fighting to retain the guaranteed week as a separate and necessary reform.

Naturally the first step to protect the worker must be taken in the workshop itself. At present the National Service officers are coming round the workshops admonishing workers suspected of a tendency to absenteeism and lateness. These interviews take place solely between the man and the officer, although the writer has heard of an instance where a representative of the management was present. Here is where the defence of the worker must start. The worker should categorically refuse to discuss with or listen to the National Service officer unless he is accompanied by his shop steward. The shop stewards must likewise insist in being present at all such interviews. Here the first line of the worker's defence must be established.

Should We Stand Aside?

Should the militant workers stand aside from the yard committees and the pit committees, seeing that the workers' representatives on those committees cannot by their votes give decisive protection to any worker? By no means. It must never be forgotten that the reformist leaders of the trade union movement are supporting those committees in the hope that they will be a counter-weight to the militant shop stewards and miners branch committees. Take the following example. In every shipyard on the Clyde the yard committees were elected on the same basis, namely, directly by the shop stewards. No objection was raised to this procedure either by the management or by the Confederation of Trades, until in two of the largest yards a decidedly militant yard committee was elected. Then the Confederation of Engineering and Shipbuilding Trades decided that methods of electing yard committees from the shop stewards committees were entirely wrong and ordered a ballot vote as the proper means of electing the yard committee. It may well be doubted whether the ballot vote will give them any better results, but the intention of the reactionary bureaucracy to free the yard committee from the control of the general body of shop stewards and to make it a rival institution to the shop stewards is sticking out clearly. It would therefore be an unpardonable tactical error to stand aside from the election of those committees. Besides, while the men's side of a yard committee cannot prohibit the prosecution of a workman for any of the four classic misdemeanours of the Essential Orders, it can at least put up a strong resistance to the idea of prosecution, and if it is acting as an outpost of the general body of shop stewards, it can bring deeds to reinforce words in getting a prosecution

stopped. It is here that the struggle around the Orders can commence. It is one thing for the trade union bureaucracy, without in any single instance consulting their members by the ballot vote (so much cherished by the Clyde district of the Confederation) to agree to the imposition of a legal framework of Fascist penal discipline on the workers. It is another thing to operate this in the workshop in view of the present relation of forces, which is such that if the workers act unitedly, they can render the penal clauses of the Order null and void.

When Should We Appeal?

As to whether the shop stewards and the unions use the Local Appeals Boards it all depends on the issue that is raised. Say a worker wants to change his job and is refused permission to do so. It would be ludicrous to make that a case for industrial action on the part of the workers. Such a case could quite properly go before the Appeal Board, and the workers shop steward or trade union branch should be allowed to appear on his behalf.

On the other hand, suppose the employers, anxious to get rid of an active shop steward or a militant worker, should decide to dismiss him for "gross misconduct." Can the workers allow the question of whether their steward is to be reinstated or not to go to the Local Appeal Board, i.e., to the ultimate arbitration of some government official? Obviously the workers could not take this suicidal course. Their key men in the factory must be defended with all the power of the workers' organisation. Take what happens when they trust Appeal Boards. Near Glasgow is a firm which for long enough refused to recognise the trade unions, or to negotiate with its workers, although it was entirely on war work. Finally, recognition of the union was forced and a collective agreement arrived at. A young man in this factory who was active in building the union was made shop steward. In the course of his duty he had to negotiate on the case of a fellow worker. Before going up to the office to negotiate he told his foreman where he was going. He was a considerable time on this mission, and later in the day when he came back to work he was dismissed for gross misconduct, i.e., for leaving his job in order to carry out his functions as a shop steward. The case was taken to the local Appeal Board, who upheld the young man's appeal against dismissal. The National Service Officer took the case to a higher instance and the appeal was rejected. In face of such ludicrous decisions trade unionists can only decide not to use the Appeal Boards on questions of vital trade union principle but to rely on the strength and activity of their trade union and workshop organisations.

The first consequence of the introduction of the Essential Works Order on the Clyde is that certain managements, believing that the Lord (beg pardon, Mr. Bevin), has delivered the workers into their hands, are proceeding in the face of rising prices and increased taxation to cut the workers bonus earnings. Let one works producing tanks be taken as an example. Last October a production bonus was agreed to and the men went ahead on tank production and produced a steady amount of tanks per week, although they could have produced more had there been a better

flow of materials. But it appears to be the fixed idea of some stupid managements that workers, no matter what their output is, should not be allowed to earn more than a certain sum of money per week. So this management is insisting on a bonus cut, and may cause a strike if it persists. "Produce more tanks for the brave boys at the front and your reward shall be a cut in your bonus." The fact that every reactionary management has been emboldened to attack the workers is the best commentary on the alleged blessings of the Essential Works Orders.

Those Orders were accepted by the bureaucracy without even the pretence of consultation—except in the case of the miners—although even here the ballot vote was refused. The working class has therefore still to express its opinion of this Fascist labour discipline, as it has to express its opinion of the trade union bureaucracy's policy, which might be defined as "Fascism by consent." But that it will express its opinion by deeds as well as by words is certain. The legal scaffolding of a servile Fascist economic order is being erected, but will the solid building follow the construction of the scaffolding? Not unless the British working class is false to its historic tradition; not unless the devoted militants of trade unionism in the workshop falter in the defence of the vital interests of the workers. That is less likely than that the workers will find ways and means of dismantling the scaffolding of servitude, thus defending the British people from those who are playing the game of Fascism under the pretence of fighting it.

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Dialectical Materialism and Modern Science

II. The Unity of Opposites

BY J. B. S. HALDANE, F.R.S.

IN THE physical theories of the nineteenth century the constituents of the world were rather sharply divided into two groups. On the one hand were particles such as chemical atoms, on the other the field between them, or ether, which was the carrier of waves of radiation, including light, radiant heat, and radio waves. The term "matter" was often reserved for the particles, even after it had been found that radiation has mass.

In the twentieth century this distinction broke down. It was found that under certain circumstances radiation, including lights and X-rays, was not absorbed continuously, but in definite units, or quanta. The amount of energy in a quantum is quite independent of the intensity of the radiation, but proportional to its frequency. Thus light behaves both as if it were composed of waves, and also as if it were composed of particles, the particles containing more energy in blue than in red light, and far more still in X-rays. The analogy to matter became still stronger when light was found to have weight as well as mass. That is to say it does not merely push an object which absorbs or reflects it, but is bent out of its path by a heavy body, as the French revolutionary Marat had believed, on quite erroneous grounds. The deflection predicted by Einstein and found by Eddington was much smaller than what Marat believed he had discovered.

Still more startling was the discovery that ordinary matter and electrons have wave-like properties. These are already of practical importance in connection with the electron microscope. This is used for examining objects too small to be visible by ordinary or even ultra-violet light. For example it has shown that the grains in a developed photographic film have a complicated structure like that of a tangle of string. A beam of electrons is focussed by a combination of electric and magnetic fields which take the place of the lenses of an ordinary microscope. Such a beam behaves in many respects like a beam of light, provided the speeds of the electrons in it are uniform. It forms interference patterns with a suitable grating. And the wave-length of the electrons in the beam make it impossible to photograph objects smaller than this length, just as in the case of light. The frequency of vibration associated with an electron is constant, so the wave length is inversely as the speed of the beam of electrons. Atomic nuclei have similar wave-like properties.

The union, both in matter and light, of these wave-like and particle-like properties, allows the development of an extraordinary degree of complexity even in systems such as a single atom, built up of very few constituents. Thus a hydrogen atom consists of two particles only, yet it can emit a spectrum in which many more light frequencies have been

measured than the number of notes in a grand piano. The branch of physics which deals with these properties is called quantum mechanics, and might well be called dialectical mechanics. For, at least as at present formulated, it ascribes both to ordinary matter and to radiation properties which common sense regards as irreconcilable. But this contradiction allows of extremely accurate calculation of properties of matter and light which can be measured.

So much for small pieces of matter. Let us pass to phenomena on a larger scale. Consider an organism which is not growing or diminishing rapidly, such as an adult man or insect, from the chemical point of view. Its intake and output of matter balance pretty exactly. But so do those of a steam engine or an internal combustion engine. The organism obeys the same laws as the engine as regards energy, but it differs in some fundamental respects, of which I only mention one. In the machine some parts last more or less unchanged through its "life"; others, such as washers, are occasionally replaced; whilst the lubricating oil is replaced still oftener, and the coal or petrol continually. In an adult animal it has long been known that the soft parts were constantly being renewed, proteins and other organic constituents being built up from the food, and then broken down and excreted. However one would expect that at least the hard parts, such as bone, would be stable like the hard parts of a machine. Hevesy fed adult rats with sodium phosphate containing some artificially made radioactive phosphorus atoms. He found that after a few days some of these were present in the solid material of the bones. Growth had ceased, but exchange had not. Thus the living substance is a unity of anabolism, or building up, and catabolism, or breaking down of chemical compounds, and this even applies to the bones. The end of this unity of opposites is death. Once an animal is dead, it is possible to preserve it, and the atoms in its tissues (may) mostly stay put for centuries.

If either tendency is carried too far, the unity is destroyed. A man may die of a disease like cancer, where too much material is built up in certain parts, or of a wasting disease such as diabetes, where not enough is built up. But all the manifold developments of life may be regarded as products of this struggle.

The struggle is very obvious within a community of plants and animals, or biocoenosis. All members of it, except plants (generally green) which live by photosynthesis, and saprophytic bacteria and the like, which live on dead organisms or excreta, live by killing or injuring other members. And yet these warring members form a unity which can be upset by altering the numbers of any of them. Thus if wolves eat deer which eat plants, there is a rough equilibrium, though numbers will fluctuate owing to good and bad seasons, epidemics, and so on. If the wolves are killed off the number of deer increases until it is limited by starvation. There are somewhat more deer, but mostly half-starved. Thus in practice some killing by beasts of prey is needed to keep the herbivora in health. Similarly cattle eat grass in a meadow. But they also eat and trample down larger plants which would choke the grass if it were not grazed. In fact an apparently hostile relation is often to some extent beneficial.

The experience of colonization has shown that the killing off of certain members of a community may easily upset the equilibrium by allowing another group of members to increase. There are violent fluctuations of numbers which generally at some point involve a destruction of green plants and impoverishment of the whole community like that which occurs in a capitalist trade slump. Within the unity of the group of species some pairs of species are on the whole antagonistic, some on the whole co-operative, but complete antagonism and complete co-operation are rare. There are obvious analogies with the State, but they must not be pushed too far, if only because the children of capitalists may become efficient workers, and workers may become capitalists, whereas many thousands of years would be needed before the lion would "eat straw like the ox." Still more important is the facts that man is characterized by production, so that human history is determined by economic as well as biological processes, and that he can to some extent consciously plan society, and thus ultimately escape from social forms which are determined by internal struggle.

Now let us rise still higher in the scale of magnitude, to stars. We know more than at the first sight would seem possible about the internal constitution of some stars at least, because the matter in them is not very densely packed, except perhaps at the centre; and though the temperature is very high, that is to say the atoms are moving very fast, their speeds seem to be no greater than we can obtain in a cyclotron. When atomic nuclei collide at these high speeds they sometimes unite, and heat is generated, as in ordinary chemical reactions, but in quantities which are about a million times as large per atom. The rate is sufficient to keep the sun shining at its present rate for many thousand million years. But the development of heat tends to make the stars expand, and the lessened density means fewer collisions, and therefore a slower heat generation. Similarly a decrease of temperature allows the star to contract under its own gravity, so that more collisions occur, and consequently more heat production.

In most stars these two tendencies are in equilibrium over short periods. But in one group of large stars, the Cepheid variables, they are not. These stars pulsate, expanding and contracting with periods of a week or so, and corresponding changes in light intensity. In case it be thought that I am dragging in "conflict" in the interests of Marxist theory, I may be permitted to quote from Gamow's popular "The Birth and Death of the Sun": "The pulsations come as the result of a conflict between the nuclear and gravitational energy-producing forces in the stellar interior." And in the long run the equilibrium is not stable, in many cases at any rate. Stars undergo two types of explosion. One type produces an ordinary *nova*, a so-called new star of which one flashes up in our galaxy every few years. This is not really a new star, but a vast increase in the light of a previously faint one. The other type, or *super-nova*, is far more brilliant. An explosion of this type occurs in our galaxy about once in a thousand years, and the exploding star is visible in broad daylight. Enough *super-novae* have been seen in other galaxies to make it fairly clear that the explosion

is much more intense than the ordinary *nova* explosion.

It seems probable that most, if not all stars, explode in one of these ways once in their lives, and then change their structure considerably. It also seems that the explosions are not due to collisions or any other external agency, but to the internal struggle between the expansive and contracting tendencies, which, after millions of years of apparent equilibrium, produces a qualitative leap.

Many more cases might be given, notably the modern chemical theories of tautomerism and resonance energy, especially as developed by Pauling. But these examples should be sufficient to show that recent work is tending to verify Lenin's statement as to "the contradictory, mutually exclusive, opposite tendencies in all phenomena and processes of nature," and the view that the struggle between these tendencies is the cause of development.

ON TO FIVE HUNDRED !

Fifty-one new Discussion Groups have been reported to us this month. There are now over two hundred and fifty Groups actually known to us. The tempo of growth is sharply increasing. Within a measurable period there will undoubtedly be FIVE HUNDRED of these Groups in active existence. If your district, street, housing block or workshop has no Group yet, get it formed in July—our Birthday Month—and have it numbered amongst the foundation five-hundred Discussion Groups.

Space now forbids our giving a full list of Groups each month—a full list was given in our June issue. The following places are where Groups have been formed during the last two months only.

Aberdeen	Coulsdon	Kensington (Nth)	Ruislip
Aberporth	Dartford	Kidderminster	Saltcoats
Andover	Dorset	Lambeth	Sedgley
Ashby-De-La-Zouch	Dulwich	Lancaster	Slough
Bacup	Dunstable	Leicester	Southall
Barking	Eastcote	Leyland	St. Annes-on-Sea
Beaconsfield	Edinburgh	Llanelly	St. John's Wood
Bedford	Epsom	Lowesmoor	St. Helen's, Lanes.
Bermondsey	Fareham	Maidstone	Stoke-on-Trent
Bideford	Gloucester	Maldon	Stockport
Bilston	Hampstead	Malvern	Stratford-on-Avon
Birkenhead	Hanwell	Manchester 18	Southampton
Blackpool	Hanworth &	Marple	Sutton Coldfield
Bletchley	Feltham	Mitcham	Tulse Hill
Brentwood	Hayes (Midx)	Naitwich	Walsall
Brighton	Hemel Hempstead	Newark	Watford
Brynmawr	Hertford	Newcastle (Staffs.)	Welling (Kent)
Bush Hill Park	Heston	Newdigate	Winchester
Burry Point	Hillingdon	Northolt	Windsor & Eton
Chester	Hitchin	North Harrow and	Wolverhampton
Chingford	Horsham	Raynes Lane	Woodford Bridge
Cleethorpes	Ilford	Plumstead	Workshop
Clifton	Iver	Ringwood	Yeovil

Groups are in process of formation in the following towns. Will all readers in these districts communicate with us:

Chesham Dunbarton Malvern Paddington Watton (Norfolk)

Special Discussion Notes on each issue of the LABOUR MONTHLY are prepared by the Groups Department and sent to every Convenor. These form an invaluable basis for the study of each issue. These are also valuable to individual readers at the price of 3s. 0d. per annum.

Please address any enquiries to Discussion Groups Department,
134, Ballards Lane, N.3. We shall be delighted to help you.

The Labour Conference

(under Tory patronage)

BY E. M. WINTERTON

IN 1936 and 1937 the Labour Party leaders refused to join in a common front with the Communist Party, the Liberal Party and the Co-operative movement in order to defend the democratic Republic of Spain, and thereby make possible an international peace bloc with the U.S.S.R. which would have prevented the war. Since 1940 the Labour Party has been in a coalition with the Liberal Party and the Tory Party to defend the British Empire, in a war brought about by the absence of the peace bloc. Refusal of coalition in the interests of the working people when that would have upset the plans of British Imperialism, acceptance of coalition with the capitalist Parties when that is required by the dire necessity of British Imperialism: no wonder the Labour Party Executive took every step possible to throttle discussion before and at the Labour Party Conference this year on this crying contradiction.

The gagging of the rank and file, as expressed by the refusal to allow them to send in considered resolutions from local organisations, was all the more necessary because the policy of coalition had very little but disaster to report, so far as concerns the common people. When the Conference opened in London on June 2, the country was full of doubt and criticism of the Government over the defeat in Crete. The waste, inefficiency and robbery in connection with war production was a constant topic of public and private discussion. The revolt of housewives and many other great sections of the people against the scandalous class privileges permitted in the food supply was spreading. In the great towns, problems of fire-watching and of proper air-raid protection for the civil population were more urgent than ever. In India many thousands of the champions of national liberty against British oppression were suffering internment, ill-treatment and privation of elementary political rights. The government of which Messrs. Attlee, Greenwood, Dalton, Morrison and Bevin are leading members was inflexibly pursuing the same policy as Chamberlain towards the U.S.S.R. Attempting to profit by all this to promote a fascist Anglo-German peace, at the expense of the common people of both countries, Hess had landed in this country amid a sympathetic demonstration by the entire millionaire-owned British press (including the *Daily Herald*), and by such figures as Sir Neville Henderson, former British Ambassador in Berlin, and Mr. Ward Price of the *Daily Mail*.

The Labour Party Executive was very careful to prevent discussion which would have revealed the subservient part it had played on all these fundamental issues. This it ensured by the procedure already mentioned—of allowing no local resolutions, and of submitting merely its own report for acceptance or amendment page by page. Yet, lest this procedure

should be inadequate, the report itself was suitably constructed. Of Crete, of the state of war production, of fire-watching and shelters, you will not find a word in those sections of the report which admit of discussion, i.e., which are not merely a record of activities by the Parliamentary Party (though there is precious little there also). On Food, the only action reported was a deputation to the Minister in the early spring, about the things that the workers are urgently demanding action on (preferential rations for heavy workers, better distribution arrangements, obligatory provision of school meals, etc.). Of India, in the general report, there is not a word: and in the Parliamentary report the Labour Party could boast of having approved the repressive policy of the British Government in India (p. 59), of a statement in the House of Lords "expressing earnest belief in the right of the Indian people to self-determination" (p. 71) and of a further declaration of the same kind, while of course endorsing British Government policy, on August 14, 1940 (p. 73). The state of relations with the U.S.S.R. was never questioned in the report; nor was the closing of the Burma Road, beyond a timid enquiry on July 18, in the House of Lords, whether the British Ambassadors in Moscow and Washington, and the Canadian Defence Minister, had been consulted. Thus the inveterate hostility of long standing displayed by the British Government to 480,000,000 Chinese, 400,000,000 Indians, and 193,000,000 Soviet citizens, was a matter of no consequence to the Labour Party leaders—or else they were determined that it was not a fit subject of discussion by the rank and file.

What was fit for discussion? Two incredibly vapid, ambiguous documents, full of elastic formulas, airy generalities and meaningless phrasemongering, on "The War" and "The Peace." The Labour Party Executive has produced many high-sounding and meaningless documents in its time, but none to equal these. In so far as the phrases sounded Socialist, they were copied from the stale old platitudes of twenty years since, like "Labour and the New Social Order" of 1918. In so far as the phrases were new, they were faithful, nay abject, copies of Mr. Churchill's perorations and of leading articles in papers like the *News Chronicle*. Amidst the mass of verbiage in the memorandum on the war, we may notice the astonishing claim to have put up "determined opposition" to the policy of appeasement and abandonment of collective security; and the reference to China's heroic struggle against "the Oriental partner in the Anti-Comintern Pact" (with never a word of the Soviet Union's major help for China, or of the Anglo-American massive aid for Japan). Freedom and independence is to be restored to "the conquered peoples"—conquered that is, by German and Italian Imperialism, not British or French; for the latter there is an elastic promise not to "accept the persistence of conditions . . . inconsistent with the principles for which we stand" (the principles themselves being overlooked). The world is proclaimed "a single economic unit" with international planning as the means to raise the workers' standard of life—as though Socialism had ceased to be the basis of society in the U.S.S.R., since it was recognised as such by the T.U.C. General Council in 1925.

Still more vague and turgid was the document on "The Peace." Thus,

it proclaimed that victory in the war can only be achieved through "the instant and thoroughgoing recognition that the interests of Commonwealth come before those of any vested interest, however powerful." So far from recognising that throughout the war the vested interests have laid more and more powerful hands on Commonwealth (if the system by which a few hundred millionaires rule 48,000,000 British and 400,000,000 Indians be dignified by that title), the document even attempts to suggest the contrary, because "the Treasury has assumed powers over the Banks." In fact, says the memorandum, "as we prevent exploitation in War, so also can we prevent it in Peace." Perhaps that sufficiently illustrates the insults to the intelligence of the common man and woman of which the Executive memorandum was composed. At all events, the examples quoted should show why the Executive did not venture to submit the documents to the close and pitiless criticism of the 304,000 individual members still left in the Labour Party at the end of 1940, after 105,000 had left it in 12 months.

For that was the other side of the medal which the Labour Party Executive exhibited to its 40th Annual Conference. Three pages in the report are devoted to "strengthening", "reorganisation," disaffiliation and straight honest-to-God expulsion of opposing members and organisations, denounced as disruptive, subversive and so on. The branches themselves, in face of the policy of their leaders, "refrained from organising normal Party activities because Ministry of Information meetings proved an effective means of stating the nation's case" (p. 18). Special encouragement had to be given to local Parties "where possible to recommence their activities to educate public opinion"; as a result, about 100 local Parties (out of a nominal 614) were requesting the services of speakers from Head Office for regularly held meetings, in addition to the occasional requests.

Is it surprising that membership should have fallen by 25% during the year—a year in which Communist Party membership substantially increased? Is it surprising that income should have fallen during 1940 from £76,000 to £56,000, and that from literature in particular there should be a decline from over £9,000 in 1939 to under £4,400 in 1940? As the literature in general was constructed on the same principles as the memoranda quoted earlier, the answer is very obvious.

It was indeed an ungrateful *Times* newspaper which, on the opening morning of the Conference, while welcoming the Labour Party's unity with the capitalist parties, yet in its leading article denounced the Executive's memoranda as "not well prepared . . . built on phrases that ring hollow . . . doctrinaire rhetoric . . . ill-advised and even inapplicable party jargon." Throughout the Conference proceedings, the Executive did its best to show its capitalist friends, on the one hand, that a little such jargon was a bare necessity, if the delegates were to be able to keep the rank and file quiet: yet, on the other hand, that there was no thought in the leaders' minds of questioning the policy and the leadership of their Tory patrons.

Probably there was never at any Labour Party Conference such a fragrant bouquet of tributes to the Tory leaders. The Government had "applied more and more the principles of Socialism to the machinery of

government and the industries of the country," proclaimed Mr. James Walker, M.P., in his presidential opening address. All the members of the Government were absolutely united, and were working together "as good comrades in a great adventure," declared Mr. Attlee, Lord Privy Seal, when introducing the memorandum on "The War" on the second day of conference. He added that "the main ideals of our civilisation rang through the speeches of President Roosevelt, the Prime Minister and Mr. Fraser" (the Prime Minister of New Zealand). When challenged about this profound confidence in capitalist politicians, Mr. Arthur Greenwood, replying to the third day's debate on the memorandum entitled "The Peace" pointed to the promise of Mr. Eden that there was going to be social security at home and security abroad, and triumphantly declared: "No Conservative Minister has ever used such Labour language before." When Mr. Noel Baker was asked (on the second day) about War Aims, he said they could be found any day in the speeches of Ministers, and had been enunciated by Lord Halifax and Mr. Eden.

Apart from these expressions of full confidence in and cooperation with the Tories, the speeches of the Executive representatives were little more than variations on the keynotes struck by the two memoranda. Other high lights were Professor Harold Laski's dire threat to cease co-operation with the Ministry of Information and the B.B.C., unless a Labour Party nominee gets a post in the Ministry (June 2); the pathetic exclamation of Mr. Fred Watkins, M.P. (Railway Clerks): "Could there be any more detestable thought than the possibility of the swastika flying over the pavilion at Lords?" (June 3); and Mr. Dalton's announcement that the old relationships between capital and Labour have gone, never to return, and finance was "the servant and not the master of political policy" (June 4).

The voice of the rank and file contrived to make itself heard in every occasional and sparse interludes. On the first day, in the general debate on the report, Mr. Silverman, M.P., and Mr. Potts, Chairman of the N.U.R. Executive, protested vainly against the steamrolling procedure adopted at the Conference by refusing to admit local resolutions. Mr. Noble (Edmonton) raised the issue of the widespread under-feeding in the country, and several delegates protested against the retention of the Means Test. A doctor gave a destructive analysis of the family income allowed by the Government under the means test arrangements. Several delegates showed how the Labour Party is losing influence to the Tories in the localities, as a result of the political truce and the consequent paralysis of local activities. The expulsion of the King's Norton Divisional Labour Party, for refusing its support to a Conservative in a bye-election, produced strong feelings among local delegates, and the one vote reflecting something like the division between the rank and file and the Executive—510,000 to 1,915,000 respectively.

On the second day, after an entirely unreal debate on the pacifist attitude to the war, there was more discussion on isolated parts of the Executive's report, such as the holding up of shipbuilding by vested interests and the employment of young children in agriculture.

Only on the third day was there anything like a sustained debate—on

the Executive's memorandum dealing with peace. Silverman provoked loud cries of "No!" when he asked if profiteering had been prevented, and pointedly enquired on whose behalf Greenwood was preparing his "blue-prints of the new Britain." Miss Wells (Moseley) said that privilege, which they were told was gone, could be seen everywhere around them: and bombed people and women in food queues were offered empty phrases about peace and democracy. Currie (Tailors' and Garment Workers' Union) said the ambiguity of the document reminded him of Lloyd George's promises in the last war, of homes "fit for heroes to live in"; to which Mr. Hallsworth, General Secretary of the Distributive Workers' Union, very reasonably replied that it did not matter very much whether the memorandum was adopted or referred back.

After an indignant vindication of the Executive by Mr. Greenwood, with the tribute to Eden and to the co-operation of the United States, and with the promise that Britain and the U.S.A. would together "help to guide all the freedom-loving peoples along the path of peace towards a new prosperity," the Conference very aptly heard several pointed reminders of the existence of India. Macdonald (Miners), warned the Conference that the tide of war was rolling nearer and nearer to India, whose support would be sorely needed. Another M.P., the Rev. R. Sorensen, protested against the detention of 5,000 political prisoners in India, and said that if democracy was promised for the conquered countries, less could not be offered to India. The whole Conference was still while a third delegate, in place of his own remarks, read Nehru's speech from the dock, with its damning indictment of British Imperialism and the latter's hypocritical claim to stand for freedom while holding India in slavery. All the representatives of the Executive could do (Lees Smith) was to promise to refer the subject to the National Council of Labour, and to seek opportunity in the House of Commons for debate on the question.

But the outstanding feature of the criticism was its disjointed and unorganised character. For this, the group of self-styled "Leftwingers" associated with the *Tribune* bore considerable responsibility. After acting as little better than police informers against the Communists for many months, they suddenly broke out with the most fearful revolutionary demands upon the Executive in the last few weeks before the Conference. Naturally, their concern not to be mistaken for anything remotely resembling Communists was sufficient to dictate prudent abstention from the job of organising opposition at the Conference itself. There, we had the spectacle of Professor H. J. Laski, whose bold and imperious demand for a full-blooded Socialist policy from the Conference was still ringing in the ears of *Tribune* readers, being used as the Executive's big stick against the opposition on the King's Norton question, and ridiculing even his own associate, Mr. Aneurin Bevan, M.P.; while others of the group—Messrs. G. R. Strauss, M.P., and K. Zilliacus—made timid and respectful criticisms of the Executive's excessive caution and ambiguity. The inevitable role of any anti-Communist "Left wing," as a means of *disorganising* opposition and doing the work of the leadership, was thus

once again demonstrated, as many times before in the history of the Labour Party since the last war.

We had almost forgotten to mention that the memoranda were adopted by the necessary majority—2,430,000 to 19,000 in the case of the first, 2,413,000 to 30,000 in the case of the second. "Thus the world was given an outstanding exhibition of Democracy, strong and confident, functioning effectively even in the midst of a life and death struggle" was the comment of the Labour Press Service the following week. "Only one reply is possible to the decisions of the Labour Party Conference—unity for the independence of the Labour movement, and the ending of coalition with Toryism must be proclaimed in every factory, trade union and Labour Party organisation. It must be carried forward against the leaders who have embraced the policies of destruction" was the comment of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party, declaring that the Labour Party Conference "in this hour of deepest crisis of the people of this country, has completely failed to face the needs and demands of the masses of the people against the bankrupt Government and ruling class who have brought them to this outcome."

Every reader of the "*Labour Monthly*" owes it to his own conscience to make up his mind as to which of these judgments was the right one, and to draw the conclusion as to his own position in the organised struggle for a people's way out of the war and for a Government which will make Britain safe for the people.

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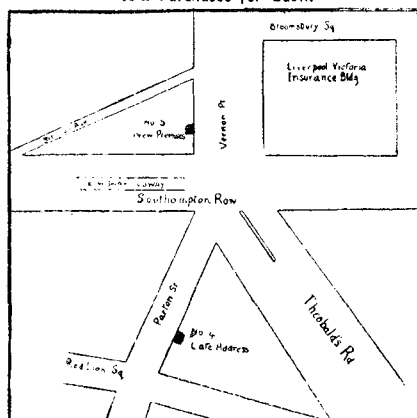
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“Blood and Tears” in the Factories

BY PETER FIELD

THE GREATER the inefficiency and waste in industry, the more intense the speed-up. That is “dialectics”—as practised by the employers upon the workers. Idleness and slave-driving, redundant machinery and over-worked machines—they go well together in the anarchic system under which we are living.

On one of its last pages, neglected by most of those who look at it, hardly ever quoted by the press, whether Tory or Labour, *The Ministry of Labour Gazette* publishes a monthly survey of fatal accidents in industry. Fatal accidents are very often the result of over-fatigue of the workers, and this in turn is usually the result of too great an intensity of work, of too hard slave-driving, of too many hours of work per day and per week. How have the number of fatal accidents varied in recent years, according to *The Ministry of Labour Gazette*?

FATAL INDUSTRIAL ACCIDENTS (Excluding Seamen), 1939 to 1941

Month	1939	1940	1941
January	170	238	276
February ...	169	210	274
March	205	207	264
April	139	208	
May	166	227	
June	190	211	
July	140	226	
August ...	192	226	
September ...	209	225	
October ...	254	280	
November	199	238	
December	219	250	
Total—per year	2,252	2,746	
Total—first quarter	544	655	814

Fatal industrial accidents have increased enormously. *During the first quarter of 1941 fatal accidents were more by about 50 per cent. than in the first quarter of 1939. And this in spite of the fact that owing to the call up of many workers the number of employed workers was lower in 1941 than in 1939.*

There are no recent data available concerning the development of non-fatal accidents. But up to February 1940 the recently published “Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Factories for the Year 1939” shows the following development:—

NON-FATAL ACCIDENTS IN INDUSTRY

September 1938 to February 1939	92,563
March 1939 to August 1939	93,099
September 1939 to February 1940	104,571

Even during the first months of the war, when the speed-up in the factories was still considerably less than during the last year, the number of accidents increased by 13 per cent. Under Churchill and the Labour Ministers the increase has been very much greater.

To-day the rate of fatal and non-fatal accidents in industry is probably not much less than 150,000 per year—considerably more than the number of casualties in the Army, Navy, and Air Force combined.

BOOK REVIEWS

A New Approach to Greek Drama

Aeschylus and Athens. By George Thomson. (Lawrence and Wishart. Special Edition for the Marx Memorial Library and Workers' School. 10/6).

The special edition of this very important book differs from that for the general public by the inclusion of a short preface. Here, in a brilliant six-page essay, the author argues, incontrovertibly, as I think, that bourgeois historians, lacking an adequate philosophy of history, have given a distorted account of the civilization of ancient Greece. The Greek city-state rose out of tribal society and cannot be understood apart from its origin. But the writers of the *Cambridge Ancient History*, assuming that private property in land, the monogamous family, and anthropomorphic religion were contemporary with the oldest form of Greek society, and avoiding all discussion of primitive communism, group marriage, and totemism, shelve the whole problem of the transformation of tribe into state.

What is the relevance to the particular subject of his book of this caustic criticism of bourgeois historical scholarship? Professor Thomson contends (I quote almost verbatim from his *Introduction*), that Aeschylus, as a member of the old Attic nobility, was heir to local traditions which had their roots far back in the primitive society of the tribe; that, as a leading citizen of the most advanced com-

munity in Greece, he had personally taken part in the establishment and defence of democracy: and, finally, that the fundamental question that engrossed him all his life was this—how had the tribal society enshrined in the traditions of the Attic nobility evolved into the democratic city-state?

For the student of Greek drama, this new approach amounts to a complete renewal of Aeschylean criticism, and the results established constitute a permanent gain. It is now at last possible to understand clearly what other critics have hinted at, that the dramas of Aeschylus turn on great public issues. They treat of conflicts of class with class, and celebrate the resolution of these conflicts in the establishment of the characteristic institutions of fifth-century Athenian democracy. Aeschylus was the public voice of his age, the interpreter of the city to herself. And, if we are to understand him, we must understand both the state of which he was the admiring citizen, and its characteristic art form, the state-supported drama, of which he was the greatest exponent. The study must, in the fullest sense, be an historical one. And that is the purpose of this book—to give an account of the genesis and character of Athenian democracy and of the genesis and character of the art form that rose with it, and, on this basis, an analysis of the extant dramas of Aeschylus.

This being the purpose of the book, its structure is clear. The first part

is devoted to Tribal Society, the second to the Transition from Tribe to State, the third to the Origin of the Drama. Only then is the way clear for the fourth and final part, Aeschylus himself. Of the 384 pages of the book proper, about half are devoted to the first three parts and half to Aeschylus. There still remain about a hundred pages, which are taken up with Notes, Appendices, Bibliography and Index.

The subjects treated in the first three parts of the book constitute a large and still imperfectly explored field where there is much obscurity and where most conclusions are necessarily tentative. Professor Thomson is well equipped to enter this field, and no page that he has written but bears the imprint of his exceptional learning, his eager curiosity, and his ingenuity in interpretation. Text, notes, and appendices are richly stored with valuable material, the result of special researches in various fields, the publication of which, in this death-dance of capitalism, it was prudent not to delay. Possibly the convenience of the average reader would have been consulted, and the narrower purpose of the book promoted rather than hindered, if some of the material had been reserved for separate publication. But serious students will note on every hand the achievement of solid gains. Out of the master conception of the transition from tribe to state emerge many novel and convincing interpretations of particular problems. Basic concepts, such as *Moira*, *Nomos*, and *Dike*, are provided with an interpretation drawn from the economic evolution of society. Puzzling features of the Spartan constitution become clear when we grasp the fact that that community was in a transitional stage, in structure still tribal, in function a state. Epic gains as much from being related to the rise of the monarchy as drama does when related to the rise of democracy. The suggestion that the breeding-ground for Orphism was pro-

vided by a dispossessed peasantry forcibly recruited for labour in the mines illuminates an obscure chapter in the history of Greek religion. These are examples of the successful application of the materialist conception of history to a new field, and they prepare us for the final assault on Attic drama and on Aeschylus himself.

Professor Thomson's previous contributions to the interpretation of Aeschylus, his editions of the *Prometheus* and the *Oresteia*, put him indisputably in the first rank of Aeschylean scholarship, give him, indeed, as I think, an unchallenged supremacy among living scholars in this field. This book crowns his achievement. It not only enhances one's conception of the greatness of Aeschylus, but it pulls the whole picture of Athenian democracy and Athenian drama into better shape. What have the critics had to say about it in the bourgeois press? Hardly anything by way of serious comment. The usual pattern of the notices is this: "This is the work of an able Greek scholar who unfortunately admires the U.S.S.R. His book contains some good remarks." Nowhere is the central thesis of the book stated and its value seriously assessed. This is due, in part at least, to a genuine incapacity. For the understanding of Greek literature as literature bourgeois scholarship has done splendid work. But it is unable to utilise this literature as a key to the understanding of society—a method of approach which, of course, throws a flood of light on literature itself. Of this approach to the interpretation of our classical heritage, George Thomson is the chief protagonist in the English-speaking world. It is for the younger scholars who have at heart such great issues as he has revealed to them in the dramas of Aeschylus to see to it that his uncomprehending critics do not shout him down.

B. FARRINGTON.

SHORTER NOTICE

In his pamphlet, "Over 50 years' Service to Labour," Alderman John Badley, J.P., Leeds, clearly answers his critics and establishes the fact that his expulsion from the Labour Party is due solely to his loyalty to the very principles upon which the Labour Party was established.

In his very lucid statement, supported by the publication of the correspondence with the Leeds Labour Party

during the period involved, he demonstrates in no uncertain manner that his only political crime was that of continued advocacy and support of Socialist principles instead of the policy of class collaboration with the enemies of Socialism accepted by those who expelled him—a policy that has already proved so disastrous to the interests of the people.

This policy has tried to marshal the

great forces of Trades-unionism, Labour and Co-operative Movements for the strengthening of Capitalism—be it Fascist or Democratic. Capitalism is the enemy of the people and no promise of a post-war paradise on earth can erase the spots of exploitation engendered by the system, nor destroy the spirit that determines policy in war as well as peace, with what tragic results the nation now realises. To remain a watchdog of Socialism in the days of extreme emergency is no mean achievement. To be expelled for loyalty to the principles of over fifty years' service to Labour is an honour that history will rightly appraise. "Faith

in the principles we hold dear matters most in these difficult days." Alderman John Badley, J.P., has this in abundance. Let me quote from his pamphlet:—"My early visions of a Socialist World are still bright, the mists for the moment enshrouding it will pass. 'We shall arrive!' The exploitation of man by man will end. Socialist's message, plenty for all, security for all, peace among mankind, will become a reality in the days that are to be when the Workers of the World Unite." Our duty is to make this last message a reality NOW.

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